WHAT I THINK OF THE WAR By Will Crooks, M.P.

Contributions by **Jessie Pope, E. A. Morphy, Louis Tracy, Edgar Wallace, etc.**

THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

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N.B.—All the names and characters mentioned in the stories in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE are purely imaginary.

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"WON'T *YOU* JOIN THE ARMY?"

This is the appeal which Miss Phyllis Bedells, *premiere danseuse* of the Empire Theatre, makes in a charming article on page 397. There is only one thing for you to do when you have read it—go and enlist!

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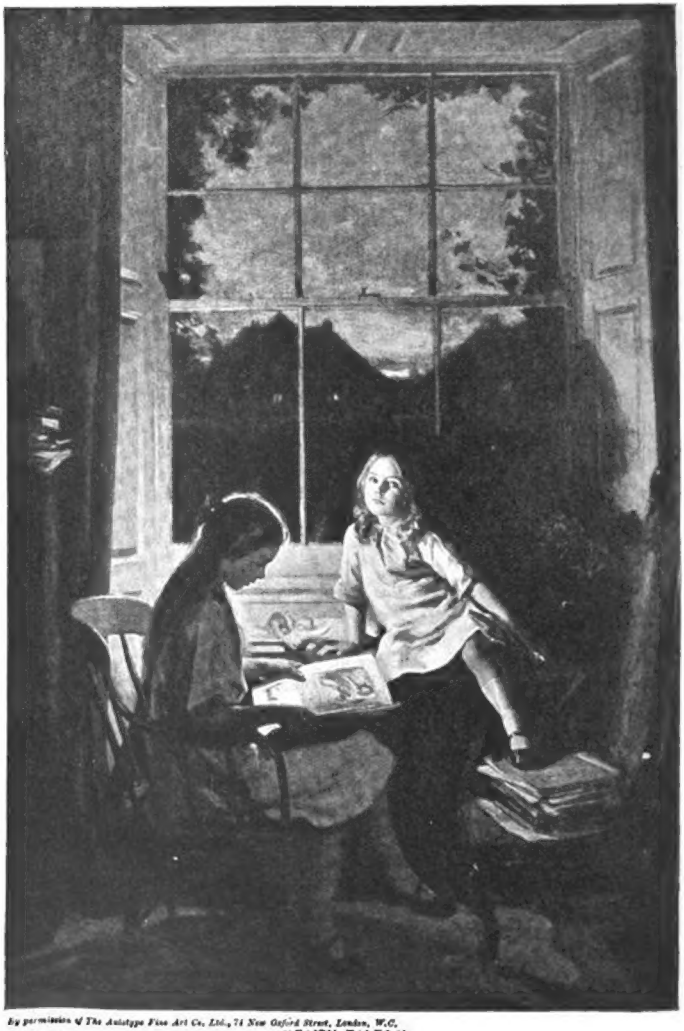

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"FAIRY TALES."

From the painting by G. Harcourt.

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"WON'T YOU JOIN THE ARMY?"

By

Phyllis Bedells

Miss Phyllis Bedells looks as charming in military kit as in ballet skirt and dancing shoes.

(*Illustrated from photographs specially taken for* THE ROYAL MAGAZINE *by Elwin Neame.*)

Miss Phyllis Bedells, the delightful *première danseuse* at the Empire Theatre, in the following article fills the *rôle* of recruiting sergeant, and appeals to the young manhood of England to join the colours.

WELL, won't you? By "you" I mean every single man of military age who has no one depending on him. I expect you all mean to join sooner or later, but really it is awfully important to do so immediately. I appeal to the sporting instinct that prompts every Britisher to be in the thick of things when there is danger to be faced.

Perhaps you may say: "Oh, it's all very well for *you* to talk! You're a girl and safe anyway!"

Personally I am not quite so sure of my safety, if the enemy ever get here, after what one reads about women being shot in Belgium. But the war has come very near me already, because my brother is an engineer in a submarine—one of the submarines that took part in the Bight of Heligoland battle. I can tell you that one does not always dance with a light heart in these days, and in fact sometimes it is not very easy to dance at all with a near relative in constant danger. Still, work has to be done and theatres must keep going, so we on the stage try to make the best of things.

You, however, have big parts waiting for you on the greatest stage of all, in the theatre of War. The setting is stupendous, and the drama the greatest tragedy, in some respects, that the world has ever seen. The piece must be played out to the bitter end, and the work is so terrific that the supply of actors needs to be renewed continually.

We flatter ourselves that for this particular type of drama our young men make the best actors. Now is your opportunity. It is seldom, on the theatrical stage, that a young man achieves immortality during his first engagement, but directly you step on to the stage of the Great War, you have added your name to the roll of heroes who will be honoured as long as the British flag flies. Doesn't the prospect tempt you?

However, I feel quite convinced that all the single men whose age allows them are determined to serve the King, and so there is no need to persuade any more. What I want to talk about is the charm and excitement of military training.

I can assure you that I take the greatest interest in soldiering, as you will realise from the illustrations of this article. Without

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wishing to appear vain, I don't think there is much fault to be found with my "drill with arms," although I'm only a beginner. If you've never done any, I should like to tell you that it isn't quite so simple as it looks, especially for a girl, because a rifle weighs about nine pounds, so that it is not to be flicked about as if it were a walking-stick. You need practice to get the knack of handling it easily and comfortably.

If any of you want to attempt the movements for yourselves, they can be done with an ordinary broom-handle, supposing a rifle cannot be obtained. I ought to tell you, though, that the exact position of the hands on the weapon is a sacred matter to a drill-sergeant, so that you will not be able to become absolutely perfect with an improvised arm.

The "stand-at-ease" and the "order arms" positions are simple enough. The first great stumbling-block comes with the first movement of the "slope arms."

This is the letter of the law:

"Give the rifle a cant upwards (you start at the "order," by the way) with the right hand, catching it with the left hand at the back-sight and the right hand at the small of the butt, thumb to the left, elbow to the rear."

Well, that sounds very easy, perhaps, but a rifle is an awkward and heavy thing to "cant." You may not cant it high enough! On the other hand you may cant it too high. For a second, you understand, your rifle is flying through space absolutely untouched by either hand; also, it bristles with twiddly bits that knock the skin off your fingers if you aren't careful. It is a nice matter to calculate exactly what strength, as a billiard-player would say, to use.

You see, the weapon has to be grabbed exactly right; there must be no fumbling with it after it is caught. Perhaps you will now appreciate at its true worth my beautiful accuracy in the first movement of the "slope!"

The second movement has its terrors for a girl, because the rifle is carried across the body with the right hand. Kindly try to carry a rifle across the body in one hand, holding it by the small of the butt, and you will see what I mean. You may have to indulge in wrist exercises before you can perform the feat with the required smartness.

Stand at—Ease (from the *Order*). Keeping the legs straight, carry the left foot about twelve inches to the left, so that the weight of the body rests equally on both feet. At the same time incline the muzzle of the rifle slightly to the front with the right hand, arm close to the side, the left arm to be kept in the position of *attention*.

Order—Arms.—The rifle is held perpendicularly at the right side, the butt on the ground, its toe in line with the toe of the right foot. The right arm to be slightly bent, the hand to hold the rifle at or near the lower band, back of the hand to the right, thumb against the thigh, fingers together and slanting towards the ground.

The chief drawback to all these rifle movements from the recruit's point of view is that, so to speak, he has no point of view at all. I mean, he may not look at what he is doing. The

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eyes must look straight to their front, and the head may not be moved. Try to carry your rifle or broom-stick across your body in the second movement of the "slope-arms" without moving the head; there is an irresistible desire to waggle the head and duck round the rifle instead of passing the rifle in front of the face. And as for canting the rifle upward without glancing down to see where it is going—well, try for yourself, but don't blame me if you drop nine pounds of potential murder on your right toes!

I am rather proud of my bayonet work on the last page, where you see me exhibiting the "on guard" position or "delivering the point"—that is, transfixing an imaginary adversary through the body. The fixed bayonet adds something or other—I forget exactly how much—to the weight of the rifle, and to thrust out a bayoneted rifle as in "delivering the point," and withdraw it quickly (ready for the next German, as it were), needs arms of steel.

Perhaps I ought to tell people who haven't joined the Army yet that this rifle I am using is the Lee-Enfield variety, as used in South Africa, and, of course, they will take the new short rifle

Slope Arms.—One (from the *Order*).—Give the rifle a cant upwards with the right hand, catching it with the left hand at the back-sight and the right hand at the small of the butt, thumb to the left, elbow to the rear.

Two.—Carry the rifle across the body (with the right hand) and place it flat on the left shoulder, magazine outwards from the body. Seize the butt with the left hand, the first two joints of the fingers grasping the upper side of the butt, the thumb about one inch above the toe, the upper part of the left arm close to the side, the lower part horizontal, and the heel of the butt in line with the centre of the left thigh.

Three.—Cut away the right hand to the side.

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Present Arms.—One (from the *slope*).—Starting from this position, seize the rifle with the right hand at the small of the butt, both arms close to the body.

Two.—Raise the rifle with the right hand perpendicularly in front of the centre of the body, sling to the left; at the same time, place the left hand smartly on the stock, wrist on the magazine, fingers pointing upwards, thumb close to the forefinger, point of thumb in line with the mouth.

Three.—Bring the rifle down perpendicularly close in front of the centre of the body, guard to the front, holding it lightly at the full extent of the right arm, fingers slanting downwards, and meet it smartly with the left hand immediately behind the back-sight, thumb pointing towards the muzzle; at the same time, place the hollow of the right foot against the left heel, both knees straight.

out to the front with them. However, there isn't much difference in the weight of the two, which is the feature of a rifle that impresses me most.

I hope I have made it plain to all you intending recruits how very interesting a weapon the rifle is, and if I have been able to help you at all in the rudiments of handling it, I shall be very proud. I daresay you will soon know more about it than I do once you've joined. Of course, I haven't gone into technical details, and spoken about trajectory, or triangles of error, or application of fire because I am talking to the men who haven't joined yet, and who wouldn't understand.

But if a girl can manage to perform "drill with arms"—you can see me doing it in the illustrations, and I am almost prepared to have a regimental sergeant-major criticise me—it stands to reason you men who haven't joined can, too. Later on you will know exactly how great a man a regimental sergeant-

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major is, and what I am confronting when I offer to undergo his criticism.

What I really want to impress on you, though, is the need for you to join *now*. Remember, this war is the biggest thing of all time, and you have the opportunity to share in it. All the great Englishmen who have gone before us would envy you your chance, and so will others who will come after you.

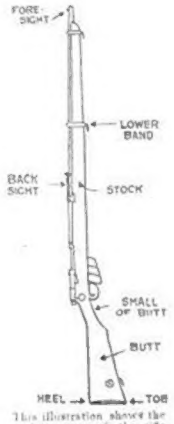
I expect there is a recruiting depôt quite close to you. Won't you slip round to it now, before you forget, and join the Army?

P.S.—In case you are not familiar with what the drill sergeant calls "the parts of the rifle," they are explained in the little picture below.

I think now I have made everything *quite* clear.

On Guard.—From the position of "Order Arms" cant the rifle forward, bayonet to the front, about as high as the breast, barrel inclining to the left, and seize it with the left hand at the most convenient place below the lower band, but not below the back-sight, right hand grasping the "small" and just in advance of the hip. Legs in a natural position, such as one walking might adopt on coming into collision with an enemy.

The Point.—Deliver the point as rapidly as possible anywhere on the trunk to the full extent of both arms, and withdraw the point at once.



This illustration shows the various parts of the rifle referred to in the article.

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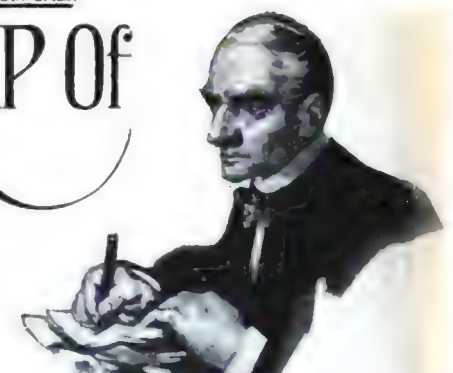
AN EXCITING STORY OF GERMAN SPIES.

A SCRAP OF PAPER



By Louis Tracy.

Spy-hunting is a perilous job, and the presence of a woman in the case only adds to the excitement. How the machinations of a pretty German spy were defeated, and she herself was made captive, is graphically described in the following story.

When Robert Faber relinquished his post as secretary to Sir Digby Grant, Lord-Lieutenant of Yorkshire, so that he might co-operate in spy-hunting with that remarkable and diminutive representative of Scotland Yard, Charles François Furneaux, he little dreamt into what strange paths his new profession would lead him.

The pair, assisted by Police-Constable Baker, put a sharp stop to two German women signalling seaward nightly from Cliffby, and their car was on the road betimes next morning. The detective knew well that his young companion's desire to lunch at Armathwaite, Sir Digby's place, was not inspired by fraternal regard for a lame brother, Jack, now fulfilling Faber's secretarial duties, but rather by the wish to see Evelyn Grant, Sir Digby's only daughter, and one of the prettiest girls in the county of broad acres.

Faber drove the Rolls-Royce. Furneaux sat beside him, revelling in the glorious weather which marked the early days of the most murderous and insensate war this grey old world has ever seen. P.C. Baker, who retained no scrap of uniform or equipment except an automatic pistol, an identification card, a pair of handcuffs, and a whistle, travelled as a passenger. The worthy fellow was enjoying life immensely. This sort of adventurous career was a great deal better than the humdrum monotony of a village policeman's duties.

At Armathwaite, where the party arrived about one o'clock, Baker was handed over to the butler, and the car intrusted to Sir Digby's head chauffeur for a thorough cleaning. Faber, realising now that he might be outspoken before his friends, told them the history of the two preceding nights.

No great divination on the detective's part was needed to read the true meaning of Evelyn Grant's sudden pallor, or understand the ill-concealed anxiety which had changed a lively, laughter loving girl into a wide-eyed, thoughtful woman. She had not guessed that Faber's appointment would plunge him into dangers as grave and threatening as any that menaced British troops in the field. She was one of the few of her sex in Great Britain who knew positively, at that date, that our army was even then crossing to France. But France seemed a long way off. It was quite another matter to hear of flying bullets, deadly mines and night signals to enemy submarines, here in quiet Yorkshire!

After luncheon, Furneaux heroically entertained Sir Digby, Jack Faber had a heap of correspondence to attend to, so brother Robert and Evelyn found little difficulty in escaping to the garden.

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"Bobbie," said the girl, after they had walked a little way in silence, "can *I* help?"

"You?" he cried.

"Yes. I'm only a weak woman, but I'm none the less a loyal citizen. Why should the men alone take all the risk, do all the stirring deeds? Do you think I am well content to remain in the security of Armathwaite while you are scouring the country after wretches who will kill you without mercy if you fall into their hands? I understand now what might have happened three nights ago. Even last night you might have been shot. You must either keep me busy, stop me from brooding over horrible things, or I'll join the Red Cross as a nurse."

He caught her arm. For once, he threw prudence to the winds.

"Evelyn," he said hoarsely, "don't talk like that! Your father cannot spare you. Nor can I!"

Those three final words, forced from his lips by the stress of an irresistible emotion, thrilled her to the core. Never before had he dared to hint at the love which was devouring him. Speech, perhaps, was not necessary, but where is the woman who does not want to hear that which she may long have guessed?

Nevertheless, she detached her arm gently.

"Bobbie, I mean it," she said. "I should consider myself unworthy of our race if I did not accomplish some small part of my country's work in the hour of her need."

With an effort, Faber recovered his poise. How could he protest? He was afraid to look into the girl's shining eyes. When next they exchanged a glance, each was self-possessed. The crisis had passed as quickly as it had arisen.

Furneaux found them in a two-hundred-years old avenue of yews shortly before tea-time. His expressive face wrinkled in a humorously sarcastic smile.

"Nice pair of turtle-doves!" he chortled. "Now to flutter them a bit!"

He succeeded beyond all anticipation.

"Marching orders!" he cried airily. "I've just been telephoning to our County Chief Constable, Colonel Fox. The Superintendent at Sandborough tells him that a young, fashionably-dressed, and very attractive woman is endeavouring to pick up acquaintances among British officers of the army and navy stationed there. Those gay young sparks are too busy to yield to her blandishments, and it is a pity that such well-meant efforts should be thrown away. You're the very man for the job, Mr. Faber."

"I?" gasped Faber, completely at a loss for any other exclamation. He could only realise that the detective had suddenly behaved like an unutterable ass!

"You, of course," chuckled Furneaux. "A nice, tall, well-groomed young fellow—you'd captivate any susceptible feminine heart. Now, wouldn't he, Miss Grant?"

"I can hardly express an opinion," said the girl. "If I say 'Yes' I shall be emulating the Sandborough siren, and 'No' would be—unfair—to Mr. Faber. At any rate, I'll leave you two to discuss your plan of campaign. Tea will be served in the drawing room in a quarter-of-an-hour—that is, if you don't wish to rush off to Sandborough this instant."

She hurried away, and neither man saw the air of smiling determination with which she was reviewing some project born of Furneaux's words.

Faber turned furiously on the detective.

"Why the——," he began.

But the little man held up a calming hand.

"Maybe the daughter as well as the father requires stirring into action," he said, affecting a yawn. "Anyhow, it's better that she should know of your new job before rather than after you've taken it in hand."

"But what on earth are you driving at?" came the wrathful demand.

"My words were clear, painfully clear. Some disconsolate female is so obviously pining for military and naval society that even the police sympathise with her. You'll fill the bill. Which will you be—a cavalry captain or a flag-lieutenant? Perhaps it wouldn't be half a bad plan if you became an officer of the Intelligence Department. Yes, that's your *rôle* to a 'T.' Surely you can talk army shop well enough to prevent a woman from guessing how little you really know?"

Faber scowled at his colleague, but, by this time, he was beginning to fathom the true inwardness of the detective's jesting mood. Furneaux was never so much in earnest as when he seemed to be most flippant. His irony might be bitter, but it conveyed its meaning.

"All right," he said. "I'm ready. I was annoyed only because Miss Grant might have misunderstood you."

"Miss Grant strikes me as being quite an intelligent young person," said Furneaux drily.

The Government agents hurried through their tea. Sir Digby was dogmatic as to the absurdity of believing that any German spy organisation could secure a really effective foothold in Britain. The habits and thoughts of a lifetime are not easily uprooted. This pompous elderly gentleman had yet to learn what a state of war means to our tight little island. Evelyn Grant puzzled Furneaux by going to the other extreme. She roundly declared that every German and Austrian in the country should be placed under lock and key—women as well as men.

"If only I could *do* something," she cried, and her fine eyes sparkled, "I'd prove myself as good a detective as the best of you."

That evening, on the Marine Promenade at Sandborough, Faber had his first sight of the lady who "adored the military." When she was pointed out from a distance he and a major of Hussars (pressed, not unwillingly, into this peculiar service) strolled through the crowd of holiday-makers still to be found in that resort of fashion. Each contrived more than once to intercept a swift glance from a pair of demure violet eyes. The lady was seated in the full glare of light near the bandstand. The two men walked to and fro, seemingly engaged in a deeply interesting conversation. After a time they chose a couple of seats sufficiently remote for privacy from the throng of visitors, though in a position where the lady could watch them if so minded.

Occasionally, while they chatted, Faber affected to consult a pocket-book. He took his part so seriously that the Hussar laughed.

"Don't you think," he said, "that a lot of this spy business is all tommy rot? What chance has any man or woman of obtaining valuable information in a place like this? And, supposing it were forthcoming, which is taking a heap for granted, how can it be communicated to the enemy?"

Faber told him how the comings and goings of the destroyer patrol along the coast were signalled to German mine-layers and submarines from Cliffby. Then it was the soldier's turn to look serious.

"By gad!" he muttered. "You don't say so! The cheeky devils! What next, I wonder?"

He, like Sir Digby, was so possessed by the notion of an inviolable England, that the presence of an enemy in our midst was hardly to be believed.

Soon afterwards he bade Faber farewell ostentatiously and strode off, taking care not to catch the lady's eye in passing. In his heart of hearts, the gallant Hussar thought that the Government agent's occupation on that particular evening was not wholly unpleasant. At any rate, it was a dashed sight more agreeable than wrestling with regimental accounts till midnight!

Thus far, Faber had acted according to instructions. For developments he must depend on his own initiative. Now, he belonged to that not altogether rare order of young man who never, in any circumstances, thrusts his acquaintance on one of the opposite sex. A difficulty, therefore, which would not have troubled the average "nut" for ten seconds, was, to him, a very real one. However, if Furneaux's information was correct, the lady might help by making the first advance. His own *rôle*, he told himself, was to be exceedingly circumspect and somewhat unapproachable. A member of the Military Intelligence Department could hardly pose as a counter-jumper out for a lark.

The opening move of the game proved easier than he anticipated. After a five minutes' interval, he sauntered past the lady, his face preoccupied, his hands behind his back and an introspective look in his eyes. He meant to ignore her completely during the next quarter-of-an-hour, the time then being about half-past nine, but the other party to this battle of wits was evidently in a hurry. Just before Faber reached her, the lady dropped a purse, and several gold and silver coins were scattered on the asphalt.

Faber, of course, acted as any gentleman would have done. He helped to retrieve the treasure, and was thanked very prettily.

"Do you know how much you had in your purse?" he inquired. "If you do, and you count your money, you can ascertain whether or not any is still missing."

"It does not matter, thanks," was the answer, given with the least suspicion of an accent. "I could not be sure. I am a stranger. I come from Denmark, and your English money is—what do you call it?—a great bother."

The accompanying smile seemed to warrant a civil comment.

"Few English people would say that nowadays," he said.

"Ah! you mean since this terrible war began? How I hate them, the Germans! In this country you do not know them—yet. But wait! You will discover the truth in time. We Danes were taught it before you or I were born."

Such sentiments, though admirable, were hardly what Faber expected from those pretty lips. In reality, he had seldom felt so awkward, so utterly unable to make the best of an opportunity. Moreover, the lady appeared to use those effective eyes of hers involuntarily. There might be some stupid mistake.

"I hope we may be able to teach as well as be taught," he managed to say. Then he was absolutely stumped, and would have lifted his hat and gone off to revile Furneaux had not the beautiful Dane seemed to read his intent.

"If you would be a good Samaritan," she murmured shyly, "take me to a quieter seat and give me a cigarette. I am dying for a smoke, but English ladies do not smoke in public, yes?"

Faber was rather more sure of his ground now. It dawned on him that an air of reserve was his best asset, so he kept it up.

"Oh, yes, certainly," he said, with due hesitancy. "That is, I mean, you know, our women-folk haven't quite adopted the habit, but I'll be only too pleased to escort you. Shall we walk a little way along the promenade?"

She rose at once. Out of the tail of his eye he noted that her movements were graceful. She was dressed in good taste. Moreover, she lowered a white veil. Evidently, for the hour, she wished to attract no more attention than was necessary.

"My name is Jansen," she said, "Mrs. Jansen, as you say in England. What is yours?"

"Faber," he replied.

"Mr.—or Captain? You are a soldier, yes?"

"I serve the King, but my present duties forbid any more detailed information. Shall we sit here?" He pointed to some chairs in the shadow of a closed kiosk.

"That will be very nice," agreed Mrs. Jansen. "Now, you have no Turkish cigarettes? I thought so. Please get some, but do not be long. I have been so lonely. No one here to speak to but fools!"

He obeyed, marvelling at the lady's direct methods, which, nevertheless, had nothing objectionable in them, and might well be the outcome of a frank nature. While walking to and from a restaurant he had a sharp eye for Furneaux, but the little man was not to be seen.

Mrs. Jansen lit a cigarette and inhaled the smoke with a satisfied sigh. Then she began to talk on general topics. If she impinged on Britain's war preparations she would pull herself up with a laugh.

"But that is forbidden, is it not?" she would say. "You must not discuss those matters with a foreigner, even a Dane."

Then, before Faber could answer, she would branch off into some airy comment on English ways or Yorkshire scenery. She was enthusiastic about the moors.

"I go to the uplands every day in my car," she cried. "Do you stay long in Sandborough? Are you free to-morrow? Come with me for a spin. You must not think me indiscreet, Mr. Faber. I am a woman of the world. I know a gentleman when I meet one."

He thought it safe to plead an absolutely unbreakable engagement for the morrow. Then, hoping to make the lady open the attack, if she were really an emissary of the enemy, he added:

"The fact is that I practically completed my work here to-day. To-morrow morning I—er—send in a report; marching orders may arrive immediately."

"But I have not seen you before. I could not have failed to notice you," she protested.

"I have been very busy. This is my first free evening."

"So you will not be writing all night?"

"Why do you say that?"

"You spoke of a report. When one is engaged in that way it is natural that one should have a good deal of writing at the end."

"Oh! not in my case. I carry all the facts in a notebook."

To Faber's own thinking this admission was far too outspoken. Were their *rôles* reversed, he would have suspected his companion of leading him on, and the very crudity of the attempt would be a danger signal. Perhaps some such idea might have flitted through Mrs. Jansen's alert brain, were it not that her eyes were keen as her wits, and a diversion occurred at the psychological moment.

"Is that motor-cyclist a friend of yours?" she demanded rather sharply.

Faber looked at her in surprise. She had raised the veil when she began smoking, and he saw now that she was gazing fixedly at a man, apparently young, leaning on the rails of a terrace overlooking the promenade, and enjoying a cigarette.

For an instant Faber imagined that the motorist might be Furneaux, but the stranger was inches taller than the detective, and unmistakeably revelling in a vice which the

little man abhorred, because he held that nicotine atrophied all the finer nerve cells and impaired the reasoning faculties!

"No," he said, after a swift glance. "I have never, to my knowledge, seen him before. Why do you ask?"

"He has been there several minutes, and is staring. I hate being stared at."

"But isn't it more reasonable to assume that anyone in such a get-up would hardly join the promenaders?"

"Well, yes. But he may be spying on you. I loathe spies. Shall we go? Come to my hotel. It is early yet. You would like a whisky and soda?"

The pace was quickening with a vengeance. Faber assured his would-be hostess that the proffered refreshment was quite to his liking.

They walked through the now thinning ranks of promenaders, and entered a crowded cliff tramway. The night was fine and clear. As they rose in rapid ascent the circular bay of Sandborough opened up in an ever-increasing dark blue carpet. A British destroyer lay at anchor near the tiny harbour. Two others were steaming out to sea. Faber found himself wondering whether or not his present unconventional mission could have any possible influence on the lives and fortunes of the gallant fellows manning those alert little warships.

"That is where I am staying," said Mrs. Jansen, crossing the roadway in the direction of one of the big hotels on the sea front. "I have a nice sitting-room, but I do not know the day I may not be turned out—just because I am a foreigner—though I loathe everything German."

"You should experience little difficulty in persuading the authorities to be lenient," said Faber.

The lady turned on him quickly.

"Can you help?" she inquired with a smile that might well work havoc in a susceptible masculine heart.

"You forget that I, too, am not known locally, while I leave here to-morrow."

The words had no sooner left his lips than the Secret Service agent knew he had blundered. He ought to have encouraged, not repelled, the notion that he might prove useful. How much more skilfully Furneaux would have managed this delicate business!

In the semi-darkness he almost flushed with annoyance, nor was there any real consolation in the fact that his present attitude was a consistent one.

Mrs. Jansen was received by the hotel servants in a manner which betokened her a generous-handed guest. Hall-porter, inquiry clerk, and liftman—each and all foreigners at that date, August 17th—were obsequious in their attentions.

"A ledder came for you by der lahst post, ma'am," said the so-called Swiss behind the inquiry counter, "und I haf sent it to your rum."

"Thanks," said Mrs. Jansen carelessly. "Any new arrivals?"

"I dink zo. Two gendlemen are weed de manager now."

A peculiar question, and an equally peculiar answer. At any rate, the lady gave the matter no further heed, but conducted Faber to the first floor, where she unlocked the door of a spacious sitting-room. A letter lay on a table. Faber saw that it bore an English postmark, but was certain that the handwriting was German, caligraphy being the one thing which few people can change from the style acquired in youth.

"Will you ring for a waiter while I glance through this?" said Mrs. Jansen with another dazzling smile.

Faber walked to an electric bell by the side of the fireplace. He fancied, but could not be quite sure, that his hostess extracted a sheet of paper from the envelope and put it in her reticule. At any rate, when she had made an end of a brief note which was displayed openly when he faced her again, she, too, came to the fireplace, took a box of matches from the mantel-piece, and deliberately burnt the document.

"I always destroy useless letters," she explained affably. "Servants read one's correspondence if it is left in one's apartments."

"A wise precaution," he agreed. "Every pretty woman must have secrets."

"Why a pretty woman only?"

"The affairs of a plain woman cannot be interesting."

She laughed. The paper was not wholly consumed, but she blew out the flame and threw the remaining scrap into the grate. After it went the envelope. At that moment the door opened and a waiter entered. It was Furneaux!

Mrs. Jansen was evidently so surprised that the flicker of amazement in Faber's eyes escaped her entirely.

"Where is Fritz?" she cried, with the same shrill note in her voice that had marked her discovery of the "staring" motor-cyclist.

The reflected light of the car's powerful head-lamps revealed . . . a goggled and waterproofed motor-cyclist, whose left hand grasped the handle-bar of the machine, while the right held a regulation revolver in most convincing style. [Page 409, col 2.]

"Fritz is oud tonide," said the detective.

"Out? Why?"

"I don'd know, ma'am. But he iss oud."

"What is *your* name?"

"Ludwig, ma'am."

"Bring a decanter of whisky, some soda-water, and a glass of milk."

Furneaux vanished.

"Another German!" commented Mrs. Jansen. "It's marvellous that you English people keep them in your hotels. Fritz, the man I asked for, is a very decent fellow—the son of a Dresden hotel-keeper, I believe, and genuinely learning the business——"

She moved to the window and looked out.

"What a glorious evening!" she continued. "Wouldn't it be fun, Mr. Faber, if we took a spin in my car and came back in an hour for a little supper? It is not very late. Don't say 'No'! A run inland for a few miles would give us a real appetite. I can lend you a fur coat."

This wholly unforeseen twist in the programme was perplexing. Faber knew that his colleague would not be prepared for the disappearance of the lady and himself in a fast automobile, so he resisted all her blandishments until "Ludwig" was back in the room with a tray.

Then he consented.

"An hour's motor-run on a night like this should be very enjoyable," he said. "But no supper, please. And you have not forgotten that we may be stopped by sentries?"

"What does it matter? You can do the talking."

She was so excited that she grew almost careless, and spoke at random. There was a telephone in the room, and she gave orders that her car should be brought round at once from the garage.

"Ludwig" paid not the least heed, but placed the tray on the table and went out. Faber mixed a small quantity of whisky and soda and drank it. Mrs. Jansen swallowed half a glass of milk hastily. Then she passed into a bed-room, explaining that she would get her own furs and a coat for her companion.

Faber had not the remotest notion whither the adventure was leading him. He meant to go through with it now at all costs, because there was something in Mrs. Jansen's manner which suggested developments. He hardly took into account the element of personal risk. It was absurd to suppose that he could actually be kidnapped in England, while the fact that Furneaux knew what was in the wind was a safeguard in itself. He eyed the scrap of paper in the grate and was tempted to secure it, because some lines of writing were still legible. But he resisted the impulse, and was well pleased with his self-restraint when Mrs. Jansen, returning with a coat, and herself arrayed in a set of sables, gave a furtive glance at the grate and its contents.

A gentlemanly-looking man, whom Faber rightly took for the manager of the hotel, met them in the hall and attended them to the waiting automobile, a big and powerful touring car. The inquiry clerk and hall-porter had disappeared. They had, in fact, just been arrested. Faber hoped that the detective might invent some excuse to come on the scene, but Furneaux remained hidden.

"George," said Mrs. Jansen to a chauffeur, "I'll drive. Mr. Faber will sit with me. Start the engine, and jump in behind."

The chauffeur, a tall, bulky fellow—apparently chosen for a heavy car on the principle laid down by Dr. Johnson in the sarcastic line: "Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat"—obeyed in silence.

Almost before he realised how completely he was in the power of these two people, Faber was speeding rapidly and silently through the suburbs of Sandborough.

Once clear of the town, the pace quickened. Mrs. Jansen turned to her companion.

"You see I can handle a car. You are not nervous?"

"No," he replied.

She touched the accelerator, and the speedometer needle hovered on the 45 mark. Faber noticed that, despite the lady's professed enthusiasm for moorland air, she was following a main road through a valley. Occasionally she would give him a beaming glance and say shrilly: "Isn't this glorious? . . . Couldn't one go on for ever? . . . What a night for flying through the air! . . . I shall hate to stop!"

Faber returned suitable answers. He could see no sane purpose in this wild racing across a populous countryside. Mrs. Jansen could hardly be running away with him. What, then, was her object? He kept eye and ear alert. He thought himself prepared against any sudden attack. Yet he was not. No man can remain braced indefinitely for instant action, and, when the crisis came, it was contrived so neatly that he might well be forgiven for being taken unawares.

They were approaching a village when

Mrs. Jansen shut off the engine and applied the brakes.

"Too bad!" she explained. "I believe the offside rear tyre has gone."

Faber put his hand to the door. Then he felt, rather than saw, something slip down in front of his eyes, and a broad leather strap pinioned his breast and arms. He was forced against the back of the seat, and during some fraction of a second, was quite powerless. But he was active and lithe, and knew that his legs were five times stronger than his arms. Thrusting his feet against the front of the car, he nearly succeeded in straightening himself and turning inward. Nearly, but not quite. A sponge soaked in chloroform was held across his mouth and nostrils; struggle as he might, he soon succumbed to the sweet, choking vapour. The very violence of his resistance brought about anæsthesia the more quickly. His right hand caught Mrs. Jansen's wrist, which he deliberately tried to break. He heard a scream of anguish before his senses failed.

When Faber's grasp relaxed, the lady's remarks were neither English nor Danish, but markedly German.

"The English pig-dog!" she screeched. "He has torn my skin and almost broken my arm!"

"Almost doesn't count, *fraülein*. Quick now with those papers, while the road is empty—*Ach, himmel!* Take the wheel and be ready with the switch!"

The cause of the chauffeur's change of tone was the appearance of a motor-cycle, carrying no lamp, and stealing swiftly up from the rear on momentum alone. The cyclist turned and stopped alongside.

"Hello!" came a clear, well-bred voice. "Anything wrong?"

"No, no," said Mrs. Jansen as calmly as she could contrive to utter the words. "We have been replenishing the petrol tank. That is all."

In her excitement she allowed the Teutonic accent to master her perfect command of English. "B" and "p" became mixed, and "have" sounded like "haf."

"But isn't that gentleman by your side ill?" persisted the would-be Samaritan.

"No. Please don't bother about us."

"Sorry, but I must."

Before Mrs. Jansen could get the car in motion the intruder had whipped out a heavy-calibre revolver and fired a bullet into the very tyre which the lady had wrongfully accused of earlier misbehaviour. With disconcerting celerity, too, the weapon was raised again.

"If either of you two move I'll shoot to kill," said the cyclist. "Kindly believe me. I'll give no other warning."

"Are you mad?" screamed Mrs. Jansen.

"No, quite sane, thank you. So I mean what I say. The slightest movement on your part or your chauffeur's means death."

"But what have we done? Why do you attack us in this way?"

"You hear that car approaching? When it arrives you will be given a full explanation. Pah! What a stench of chloroform! That's all right, Bobbie. I've got these two covered. Take a deep breath and clear your lungs. You'll soon be yourself again."

As though waking from heavy sleep Faber slowly regained his senses. He heard Evelyn Grant's voice in the darkness, but failed completely to realise his surroundings at first.

"Where are you, Evie?" he gasped.

"Just in the right place for once. Pull yourself together. Mr. Furneaux and Baker will be here in half-a-minute."

The mist was clearing gradually from Faber's eyes. The reflected light of the car's powerful head-lamps revealed Mrs. Jansen twisted awkwardly behind the steering-wheel, the huge chauffeur standing upright in the tonneau, and in the roadway a goggled and waterproofed motor-cyclist, whose left hand grasped the handle-bar of the machine, while the right held a regulation revolver in most convincing style.

But where was Evelyn Grant? Surely, he could not have mistaken any other voice on earth for that of the woman he loved? Before he could frame a bewildered question, the Rolls-Royce appeared, driven by a chauffeur picked up haphazard in Sandborough.

Furneaux sprang out, followed by P. C. Baker. It is forbidden that the police should handcuff women, but the detective cared little for regulations, so Mrs. Jansen and her accomplice returned to Sandborough securely cuffed the one to the other.

Faber drove his own car with Furneaux by his side. Evelyn Grant, the motor-cyclist, leant on the back of the seat, because the cycle monopolised the rear of the car.

"I was anxious only on two points," said Furneaux in response to his colleague's eager questioning. "First, you might have been murdered before help came for the sake of the information you were supposed to have in your possession. Second, I feared you

might abandon the game too soon. I was needlessly worried on both counts. Miss Evelyn stuck on your trail like a Red Indian, and stepped in before any real damage was done, while you seemed positively to enjoy Mrs. Jansen's company."

"I'm rather too light-headed at this moment to stand jibes," protested Faber. "How in the world did you, Evelyn, contrive to turn up, and in that rig?"

"You ought to recognise your own overalls and cycle," laughed the girl. "I borrowed them with your brother's connivance. Dad thinks I'm in my room with a headache. But I'm not, you see. I'm taking a hand in the nation's work."

"Were you the motor-cyclist who watched us in the Spa Saloon?"

"Yes. You saw me then, and never knew me?"

"Mighty good job he didn't," broke in Furneaux drily. "As it is, we have bagged two dangerous spies, and got on the track of others. That scrap of paper left in the grate gives us the clue to the use of the German signalling code, and the code itself is in Mrs. Jansen's reticule. But the brainy exploit was my deputising for Fritz, who was arrested five minutes before you and the lady reached the hotel. You don't know, of course, that she sent me with a note to the chauffeur written in her bedroom, telling him just how to tackle you and where the attempt would be made. Having that knowledge I could let Miss Grant follow you with confidence that help would soon be available. Not that she required any. She controlled the situation admirably."

"Stop here, please," said the girl suddenly.

"Why?" demanded Faber. "Sandborough is miles away yet."

"So is Armathwaite. This is the nearest point on the road. Lift the cycle out, will you?"

Furneaux effaced himself while Faber lighted the acetylene lamp. To the young man's credit be it said, he uttered no word as to lonely roads and crossings dangerous by night. Evelyn Grant had justified the confidence he showed in her.

She was conscious of this restraint and its implied compliment. Before leaping into the saddle she brought her lips close to his cheek and whispered:

"Good-bye, Bobbie! You flirted abominably with Mrs. Jansen, but you're a dear, all the same!"

(Next month Mr. Charles F. Furneaux scores yet another victory. His achievements provide many thrills, and will be hailed with joy by all who appreciate a good adventure story, well told.)

BACHELOR'S BUTTONS.

I used to squander goodly sums
  On gifts for Helen Mabel,
I gave her chocolates and flowers,
  A stole and muff of sable.
I brought her silk and curios
  From India and China,
And purchased scent enough, I vow,
  To float a modern liner.

But now that I'm in khaki clad,
  And wield a sword and rifle,
She never pines for gloves or scent,
  Or other costly trifle.
I've saved sufficient gold to pave
  The way from here to Munich,
For all that Helen Mabel craves
  Is buttons from my tunic.

D. R.

Mr. Reg. F. Smith gives us the typical family group, in which father, mother, and little Tommy brave the camera in a spirit of defiant self-consciousness.

"LOOK PLEASANT PLEASE"

The Trials of Being Photographed Depicted by Leading Humorous Artists.

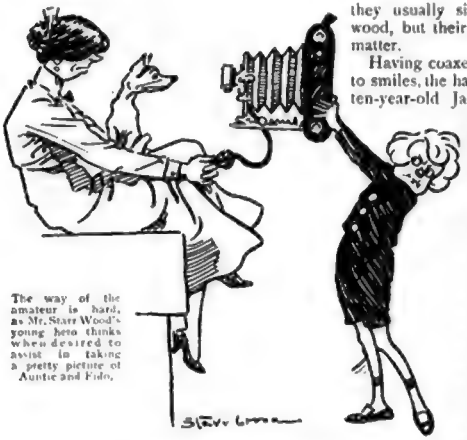
By Lesbia Robinson.

To many people a visit to the photographer is an experience well-nigh as nerve-shattering as the ordeal of the dentist. True, the physical torture is not so great, but the effort of trying to look one's best when clad in gala attire, and confronted by a young man who behaves like an inebriated Jack-in-the-Box, is tremendous.

It is bad enough to face the camera at all, but to insist on one looking pleasant is only adding insult to injury, and the result is usually either an ear to ear grin, or the pained, reproachful expression of a martyr at the stake to whom one has just offered an orange.

If the victim is a woman further complications arise from the question of toilet. Whether to appear in the barbaric splendour of a satin gown and all the trinkets one can muster, or in the chaste simplicity of a blouse and skirt, will give the would-be sitter many wakeful nights. Probably in the end she will take refuge in a wisp of chiffon draped more or less artistically round her shoulders, since such a costume does not date, and there

The average infant is always a difficult subject, and the youngster portrayed by Mr. Thomas Henry is no exception to the rule.



The way of the amateur is hard, as Mr. Starr Wood's young hero thinks when desired to assist in taking a pretty picture of Auntie and Fido.

is a touch of the theatrical about it very pleasing to the modern damsel.

To be photographed by oneself is martyrdom enough, but for the fiend who first evolved the iniquitous idea of family groups, shooting at dawn is too good. From the point of view of the photographer it is a hopeless task. The proud parents are comparatively easy to manage, since they usually sit as though hewn out of wood, but their offspring are quite another matter.

Having coaxed the dropsical-looking baby to smiles, the harassed operator discovers that ten-year-old Jackie is pleasantly employed putting worms down his little sister's neck, while she on her part is stealthily fastening her parents together by means of their shoe laces.

If he is a worthy young man he will probably strive to achieve the impossible, and wait for a moment when the whole family shall look less like a contingent from a home for the mentally deficient; if, on the other hand, experience has taught him wisdom, he will count ten, take off the cap and trust to Providence. In either case the result will be a blot on humanity, so it were surely merciful to shorten the agony?

But the terrors of even the most intractable family pale into insignificance before the terrors of one mutinous small child, who is not to be beguiled by the united efforts of all his able-bodied relations, armed with the most captivating toys from the bargain basements. Animals are only one degree better, and the operator, faced by a combination of infant and household pet, would do well to seek oblivion under a passing motor-'bus.

"A Family Conspiracy."—Eamond depicts the useless efforts of the family party who endeavour to entertain the wailing child

There are some misguided people who actually enjoy being photographed, and court every opportunity of appearing before the camera. Aunt Sarah was one of these. From earliest infancy she had been photographed once a year, and battalions of these photos kept company with wool-work antimacassars and wax fruit in her stiffly arranged drawing-room. Aunt Sarah at twelve months clad in a fat smile and a yard of muslin; Aunt Sarah seated on a stile, with well-soaped face and podgy curls; Aunt Sarah in her first long dress, as self-conscious and awkward as a curate at his first christening.

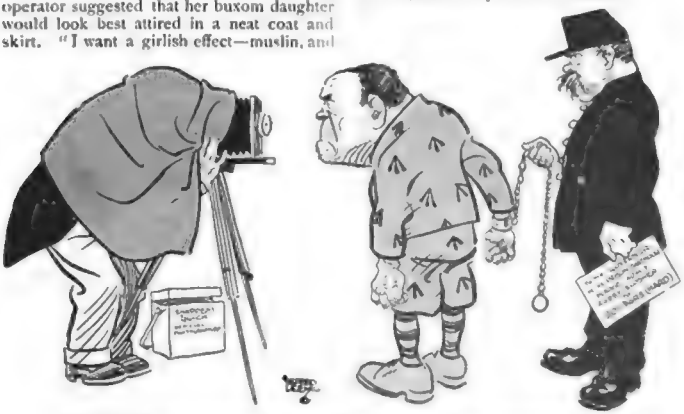
It was not until thirty-nine of these masterpieces were sown broadcast on table and mantlepiece, that their significance as an age record occurred to the good lady, who had always boasted to her friends that she had never missed a year. But it was too late Only the next day she found the curate, an estimable man with a face like a slack-baked muffin, carefully counting the tell-tale pictures. So Aunt Sarah missed matrimony by over a year, for the curate was thirty-eight, and laboured under the conviction that a man should always be older than his wife.

There seems to be a notion abroad that photographers are also beauty specialists, and however unlovely the sitter, should be able to produce a charming picture.

"I don't pay 30s. a dozen to see my Martha look like she does at home," one proud parent wailed, when a meek young operator suggested that her buxom daughter would look best attired in a neat coat and skirt. "I want a girlish effect—muslin, and artificial flowers in her hair. She can sit on a stile or marble steps if you like, but sit on an ordinary wooden chair in her serge costume she *shall* not."

And the fact that Martha came out looking like an overfed ballet girl militated not an atom against her parents' satisfaction.

"An Unfortunate Mote."—The appalling punishment which befalls restless sitters to amateur photographers, illustrated by Mr. Thompson.



"The Official Photographer."—According to Mr. Astrid Leete he has few opportunities of obtaining really beautiful pictures.

SAFE-CONDUCT

"Give 'im a letter—
Can't do no better!"

By E. A. Morphy.

I.

Wazir Ali, dreaming of the distant flesh-pots of Peshawar, dozed in his saddle while the mule he bestrode picked its way along the perilous track.

At this point, the Pass rounded a spur of the hills that stuck up like the wall of a house, seemingly miles above the floor of Asia. The point of another and somewhat similar spur jutted out from the mother range not a quarter-of-a-mile away.

Suddenly the dreamer was aroused from his reverie by the faintest ghost of a click against the wall of rock beside him. A tiny whitish splash dented the grey granite at his knee. His mule, shot clean through the brain, bounded from the ledge in its convulsion, and plunged headlong into space.

Wazir Ali was a Syed (descended from the Prophet) and a pious man. Therefore, commending his soul to that Allah whom he had long striven—according to his own lights—to serve, he flung himself from the saddle, and by some miracle of chance fell, a huddled heap, on the top of a boulder that projected from the side of the precipice about twenty feet below the pathway.

For miles above and below the spot whence Wazir Ali had been hurled by his stricken mule, the interminable line of the column—horses, mules, camels, asses, and men—crawled slowly upwards towards the saddle of the hill. In the distance, it greatly resembled a string of dust-coloured beads being drawn across a ragged wall.

An almost invisible wisp of bluish smoke whiffed out of a cranny among the rocks of the spur opposite to the spot whence the mule had jumped. An Afridi sniper, who possessed the inestimable treasure of a Martini, had got the range of the rock against which had clicked the bullet that had disturbed the Syed's reveries.

Two astounded mule-drivers halted and peered down the precipice at the huddled form of Wazir Ali.

One of them shrieked in agony.

The sniper's second bullet had ploughed through his shoulder and furrowed down his back as he stooped.

The stricken man's comrade pulled him away from the point of danger. The mules they led whinnied. A donkey brayed. A swift mutter of oaths and shouted orders rang along the narrow defile as the temporary halt of the luckless mule-drivers held up the following half of the column.

Calm as a cucumber, and with serene confidence in his ability to disentangle all entanglements, a red-tabbed captain of transport pushed up through the ruck.

"Carry him, somebody!" he ordered. "And send ahead for a dhooly."

He took a couple of steps forward and peered down over the ledge at Wazir Ali.

"Is that man dead?" he asked.

For answer, a bearded staff-sergeant caught him by the belt and wrist, and jerked him backwards.

"Your pardon, sir, half a shake!" blurted the sergeant.

The captain looked ruffled for an instant.

"Nearly had you that time, sir!" again apologised the sergeant, as the officer gripped at his other sleeve with the hand the sergeant had just released.

"Thank you, Burke," laughed the captain. "You just about saved me. The beggar got the skin off!"

He withdrew a hand that was damp with

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blood. The sniper's third bullet had winged him.

"Push on!" ordered the captain. "We can't hold up the column. Hurry up those fellows, Burke! Push on! Everybody must take his chance!"

The column pushed on. Another sniper, less efficient as a marksman, joined the original tormentor among the invisible crannies. Every two or three minutes a man or an animal got nicked—each one at the precise spot whence Wazir Ali's mule had sprung into eternity.

A messenger, sprinting up through the crawling train of transport, hurried hot-foot with the tidings to the general. A mountain-gun would dislodge the snipers. Could he get one to blaze at them?

Pending the advent of the gunners, a score of soldiers did their best. They shot at the crannies and the smoke-whiffs. The invisible snipers evinced no signs of weariness or distress.

Meanwhile Wazir Ali lay senseless and motionless on the projecting boulder.

"Who is that man?" repeated the transport captain, as soon as the sergeant had tied up his arm. The hurt was nothing.

Burke looked over the precipice, shook his head, and turned to the men who lay on their faces along the narrow path, firing at the smoke wreaths.

"Any of you men know who that native is?" he called to them.

Barney Corcoran pushed his huge shoulders over the ledge, and peered down at the huddled wisp of white and khaki. Then he sprang to his feet.

"Why, sergeant!" said he. "It's Wazir Ali—the coffee-shop *wallah*."

Sergeant Burke turned to the captain.

"The coffee-shop keeper, sir!" said he. "Wazir Ali, of Peshawar, sir. Good sort, if you don't mind my saying it, sir—good to the men——"

"Eh? What?" exclaimed the officer. "Old Wazir Ali? What do these men want, sergeant?"

Eager but respectful, Corcoran and five of the other soldiers who clustered behind the sergeant, sprang to attention.

"Ould Wazir Ali, sir," blurted out Corcoran apologetically. "If you'd let us be fetchin' him up, sir. The men's willing——"

Captain Blake coughed. He was Irish himself, and the brogue appealed to him. Wazir Ali, though only a native, and a shop-keeper at that, was, nevertheless, Wazir Ali, the coffee-shop *wallah*—the man who left his big comfortable home and stores at Peshawar whenever the Frontier tribes started a war, and followed the troops through thick and thin, over every trail in the Tirah, selling English pickles and sardines and jams, and all the other succulent delights of a soldier's mess, from tinned milk to pink sausages.

"All right, men!" said Blake, looking down the face of the precipice. "Which of you can fly?"

"Thank yez, sor!" said Corcoran, chuckling through his huge bulk. "Not me, sor!"

But it was Corcoran who squatted, as anchor, with the rope around his waist while Corporal Dunne, who was a light-weight, went over the ledge in quest of the Mahommedan trader. Mooney, Jackson, Boyle, and Hefferman stood by to slack and haul; and Mooney was the only one hit during the five minutes the drama of the rescue lasted. Mooney, being hit on the ear and the side of the head, thought he was killed, and swore loudly and profanely. Whereupon he was suitably menaced and upbraided by Sergeant Burke for using "language" in the presence of his superior officer.

A water-carrier came lurching along with his huge goat-skin under his arm, and poured water down the throat and over the face of Wazir Ali, who staggered bravely to his feet. The shock had stunned and winded him, but he was tough as whipcord, and no bones were broken.

"Salaam, Sahib!" he gasped, saluting the officer native-fashion. "It was kind of the Sahib to——"

Blake shook his head and laughed.

"It wasn't me, Wazir Ali!" he interjected hastily. "Those are your friends!" He pointed to Dunne and Corcoran and the stricken Mooney, to whom the other three Irishmen were ministering. "Thank them. You had a close call. Hurry along!"

Somewhere half-a-mile up the Pass near the hill a screw-gun bellowed angrily. A shell whizzed across the valley, and burst over the rocks, where rose the smoke from the rifles of the snipers.

Another and another shell followed.

The long trail of the transport forged ahead unmolested. The Irish riflemen resumed their places on the baggage guard. The snipers were hushed.

That night in camp, while B Company of the Donegals revelled in an orgy of jam, kippers, tinned milk, sausages, and bloater-paste, such as no company of Irish infantry in the Tirah has ever before or since

been known to enjoy, Wazir Ali, with laborious pen, burnt the midnight-oil in his tent behind the coffee shop. And in the morning, when it was seasonable, he stood in the Staff Lines salaaming gravely outside the tent of Captain Blake.

"Your God is my Allah, Sahib!" said the huckster. "But it is not for me to teach the Sahib wisdom. I owe my life to him and his soldiers. Nay, Sahib!" he persisted, when Blake sought again to disclaim any part in the rescue.

"Nay, Sahib! It was because of my mischance that the Sahib tarried and got hurt. I am a poor man, but I know the regulations, and I bring the Sahib no gifts. But, Sahib, I am what my people call a Syed."

Captain Blake nodded affably and understandingly. He remembered that they sometimes spoke of Wazir Ali as the Syed.

Syeds are reputed descendants of the Prophet. Some say they come through his grandson Hassan, and are "Men of the Pen." Others vigorously contend that they are descendants of the warlike Hussein, and are "Men of the Sword." However that may be, they are, as a rule, profoundly respected by their co-religionists; and it may well have been that the adventurous coffee-shop merchant was more or less directly descended from both.

"I know your rank and standing as a Mahommedan," said the officer genially. "But, Wazir Ali, it was not I who picked you off your perch in the precipice. You musn't thank me for it."

Wazir Ali salaamed again. Would the Sahib take a note from him—a small letter, ignorantly-worded no doubt, and ill-written, for the writer was no scholar, but a letter withal which might prove useful some day if evil befel the Sahib among the Hills?

He held out diffidently, a very common envelope in which was a slip of that rough, yellow writing-paper that is popular among Indian servants and shopkeepers because of its great cheapness.

Blake was an Irishman, and not destitute of tact.

"Thanks ever so much, Wazir Ali!" he exclaimed heartily. "I'm sure I'll be very glad to keep it as a souvenir of you—very glad indeed."

Wazir Ali salaamed again. He was no fool, and he fancied that he detected a note of complaisant tolerance—such as one might use when placating with promises some prattling child—in the tones of the transport officer.

"It is true, Sahib!" he repeated earnestly. "We have both seen sahibs fall in these affairs of the Hills. If the Sahib falls, and this letter be found on him by some man or Mullah that can read, he will not——"

The Syed mumbled uneasily.

"I know!" Blake reassured him. "Messed up, you mean, eh?"

Wazir Ali seemed relieved.

"The Sahib knows!" said he. "The Sahib will not be spoilt. Nay, more, the Sahib will not be hurt by any man who reads this letter, and who knows Peshawar and the Border!"

II

Blake was scribbling in his note-book a report of the matter in hand. The odds were that nobody would ever see the book or the entry, but there was always the sporting chance to consider, and Sergeant Burke deserved a V.C. for saving such a hulk as Private Corcoran, not to mention the good work that each of the other three survivors had put in while they were cutting their way to the tower.

It had been hot work since they had been cut off by the big native army. Blake had been jabbed up badly on previous occasions when surprise parties had swooped over a crest and nipped down on his wretched transport line, tearing the heart out of it before an adequate force could be rushed up to repel the assailants. But this was another sort of a job altogether.

A veritable army of the hillmen—an army of a thousand or so—had swept down and cut him off from both ends of the column. With less than a score of his men he had fought through the howling horde to the watch-tower on the adjacent hill. It had been collar-work all the way, shooting, cutting, stabbing, hacking, forking men up on the bayonet, splitting their skulls with the butt, grunting, cursing, gasping, fighting for every step they took, and dropping their dead for the looters to fight over.

Six out of nineteen had won out to the tower. Every man of the six was chipped. Blake guessed he would never use his left hand again—even if he lived to want to do so. Corcoran had dropped, hamstrung, not a dozen yards from the door of the tower, and Burke had carried him the rest of the way on his shoulder, swearing and fighting like a devil possessed.

They had won in, and they were holding the place, while the hillmen howled joyous taunts from the ridges all around them.

Slowly, majestically, the front wall rolled away from the tower like a curtain. The six white men stood to their arms in the dust. (*Page 419, col. 2.*)

Darkness was falling. It would be upon them before help could come, and there was no hoping for succour through the darkness.

Corporal Dunne, bleeding from the head, was coaxing the other two Donegals to "kill two min wid aich bullet."

Corporal Dunne knew—none better—that his comrades had but three clips of cartridges apiece left, counting those they took from Corcoran. Even if they killed ten "min wid aich bullet" there would still remain a hundred enemies to every one of them.

Sergeant Burke came over to the captain, who scribbled a hasty signature below his report.

"D'ye hear 'em, sor?" he asked.

Blake craned forward his head to listen.

"Chick-chuck! Chick-chuck!"

Steady and regular, like trained sappers, the click and cough of picks in the hands of the besiegers echoed softly from beneath the main door.

"They do be just playin' wid us, sor!" volunteered Burke. "The door will fall out in half-an-hour, or less, at utmost."

Blake glanced automatically through the leaves of his note-book. They remained open where the doubled-up envelope that held the letter of Wazir Ali had been thrust between the pages.

"Gad, Sergeant!" said he cheerfully. "Here's our clean pass to Paradise. They won't chop us up into nasty pieces if we manage to get this letter to one of their mullahs or anyone else that can read it, first."

Sergeant Burke said "Yes, sir" respectfully but with no emphasis of conviction.

"Is that wan o' Wazir Ali's letters, sor?" he asked deferentially. "Sure he's been givin' 'em to me an' Corpril Dunne, an' Corcoran, an' Mooney an' the other two. What good d'ye think the likes o' them would be in softenin' a lot of slaverin' savages the likes o' them outside, sor?"

Corporal Dunne was still exhorting the fighting remnant of his garrison to kill two men with each shot. The steady chugging of the picks continued to thud softly from somewhere beneath the door. Night was galloping on them with its shadows. When the full darkness fell, the door would drop out, and they would be overwhelmed.

"As soon as the door-frame collapses, the whole side of the tower will crumble," commented Blake.

"It will that same, sor!" agreed the sergeant.

The butt of a rifle clanked to the floor, and a big man drew back from his loophole and sank down beside it.

"Two min wid wan shot, me fut! Corporal!" he grunted. "The next wan I get in is wid the butt. Me last clip is empty!"

Surrender is outside the ethics of warfare as practised on the North-West Frontier of India. Among tribesmen where a parole is as inconceivable as a feathered elephant, and where the only ceremony approaching a sacrament is that wherein the father—on the birth of a man-child—implores Allah to make the baby a thief, the act of surrender is regarded as a mere ruse of battle—a delusive strategy planned on the same principle as the Horse of Troy.

Therefore, the person who attempts to practise it upon the wily hillmen is treated in a manner that is calculated to act as a lesson and a warning. When his captors are through with him, his remains are horrid things to see.

"Well, Burke," said the Captain, "we are all pretty well booked anyhow, and Wazir Ali's letters cannot put us in any worse box than we are, whatever else they may do. Can you read them?"

Burke smiled derisively.

"Not a word, sor! The wan he gave me looks like wan o' them prayer charms they give their childher to tie round their necks in lockets. I only kep' it for a curio!"

Blake stood up.

"Never mind," said he. "We can lose nothing. We may as well see what effect one of them will have. Wazir Ali's word may be a power among these people, even though he does trade with the enemies they are fighting. We'll wave a white rag at them and try."

It would have been madness to follow the usual procedure in such cases, and cease firing before they waved the truce-flag. But for a moment, Blake waved his handkerchief through a loophole, on the end of a bayonet. Then, as he drew it in, he tossed out his helmet, inside which was pinned, in full view, the letter of Wazir Ali.

Then, sticking out the white flag again, he ordered the three men to cease firing.

An exultant yelp of glee rose heavenwards from the surrounding hillmen as two stalwart ruffians raced for the message.

"Chick-chuck! Chick-chuck!" the picks still tapped their message of death under the doorway.

Then the tapping ceased, and a curling wisp of smoke floated up through the chinks.

They had set fire to the woodwork. There was no water in the tower. As soon as the frame sank into tinder, the wall would fall out, and the unprotected defenders would be easily destroyed.

The men who had picked up Blake's helmet raced back out of sight. Behind them dashed three men with picks. A hoarse cheer echoed up from hundreds of invisible besiegers.

Dusk had fallen. Through the loopholes and the chinks in the door, Blake and his men could see the glare of the fire that was undoing them.

"It's beginning to sag, sor!" said Burke.

"Yes," agreed the captain. "It's all over but the shouting."

Strange murmurs came from without.

"Are they going to rush us. I wonder?" thought Blake aloud.

"They'll wait for the wall to give, sor," answered the sergeant.

Outside was heard the padding of many soft-shod feet.

"Captin Blek, Sahib!" shouted a voice. "Is Captin Blek Sahib inside—Captin Blek Sahib of the Transport?"

"Begobs, sor!" ejaculated the Sergeant. "'Tis Wazir Ali's letter!"

Again the voice called for Captain Blake.

"Captain Blake is here!" shouted back the transport officer. "What do you want with Captain Blake?" he continued in Pushtu.

"Is that Captin Blek, the friend and rescuer of Wazir Ali—the Syed Wazir Ali, of Peshawar?"

The herald paused. His voice trembled with anxiety.

"It is that Captain Blake!" replied the astonished and delighted officer. "And with him are other soldiers who also have letters from the Syed Wazir Ali, commending them for what they have done, to all his friends!"

The smoke grew denser every instant. The tips of the flames began to flicker through the floor.

"In the name of Allah stand back from the front of the tower, Sahib!" called the voice from the dusk. "The fire eats the timbers. The wall is falling. Stand back lest a hair of thy head be injured and Wazir Ali dishonours his bond!"

Slowly, majestically, the front wall rolled away from the tower like a curtain. The six white men stood to their arms in the dust.

III.

"Nay, Sahib! It was nothing," protested the Syed Wazir Ali, as the general thanked him before all the troops assembled in the hollow square.

"Nay, Sahib!" he repeated. "All those soldier sahibs risked a life for me. I gave them only a letter. Those ruffians of the Hills with whom you fight know that I am a Syed, and that what I say comes true!"

The General patted Wazir Ali on the shoulder, while three thousand soldiers lifted their helmets on their bayonets and the improvised parade ground echoed to their cheers.

"I want to see one of those letters, Wazir Ali," said the General.

The Syed shrivelled uneasily.

"Nay, nay, Sahib! Forgive thy servant!" he pleaded. "Do not ask me until after the war!"

In the tent back of the coffee shop, Wazir Ali's book-keeper laboriously transcribed into his queer drab ledgers the letters that had been brought in by the enemy under cover of a dirty white flag:

From the Syed Wazir Ali, son of Wazir Ali, Syed, of Peshawar, greeting! The bearer of this is Captain Blake of the Transport Service, who has saved the life of the Syed Wazir Ali and who is his friend. Whoever brings this letter and Captain Blake, unhurt and in good condition, to the Coffee Shop of Wazir Ali, or any store of Wazir Ali in Peshawar, Rawal Pindi, or Kohat, will receive at once and without question the price of ten rifles and one thousand rounds of ammunition, on the Afghan side of the Peshawar Border.

The book-keeper impassively entered up the name and the amount, then picked up the next letter.

"Allah be praised!" he sighed, "but this is a high price for a soldier *wallah!*—'Privit Korkring, two rifles, eight hundred rupees; two hundred rounds ammynition (war price in Tirah), three hundred rupees!' More than a thousand rupees! Oh, Allah!"

MONEY IS ALWAYS WELCOME.

Turn to page 467 and see how you may win some in a simple and fascinating Competition.

SILK SHIRTS

"Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
And straight lay a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me!"

By Dorothy Rose.

Julie was a coquette. Every visitor to the quaint little restaurant at the corner of the Rue de la Grande Chaumière knew that, just as surely as they knew that her eyes were black as night, and her waist round and supple. Julie's hair was black, and shone like satin on her neat little head; there was a riotous dimple at the corner of her pretty lips, and she wore the most captivating blouses, open at the neck, to show her soft, white throat.

Most of the customers were artists, ferocious as to hair, but otherwise harmless enough—big, overgrown boys many of them, whom Julie alternately chaffed and bullied as she brought them their *potage* or *pot-au-feu*. Only the tall Englishman, who sat by the red-curtained window, was different—certainly he affected tweeds of astonishing shabbiness, but he wore them with such distinction; his air of lazy good humour was by no means akin to the boisterousness of the other students.

Julie adored Tony—so his *confrères* called him—a smile from his blue eyes sent her into transports of delight; his air of clean-shaven cleanliness was a revelation to her, used as she was to the casual toilets of the Latin Quarter. He was a student certainly, and rented a modest flat near by—Julie liked to think his pictures were masterpieces, though, as a matter of fact, they were commonplace enough—not nearly so good as those of Gaston Dupont, who wore flowing ties that were always undone, and ate his soup with the hissing noise of a syphon.

They were a gay, irresponsible set, *les chers garçons*, as she called them in her motherly way. That was until the war broke out. There was little laughter in the low-ceiled room then, only eager whispers, fierce denunciations, and heartfelt cheers when the strains of the Marseillaise brought them to the door as a troop of soldiers marched by along the tree-lined streets.

One by one they went their way, discarding the paint brush for the sword, and Julie's dark eyes grew wistful as the number of vacant places at the little round tables increased. Somehow, they all snatched a moment to say good-bye to her, and she coaxed, scolded, and exhorted as she thought best, and retired promptly into the tiny kitchen to polish glasses and upbraid herself for her misty eyes.

"*Il y a encore Monsieur* Tony," she told herself; "they are brave lads, and *le bon Dieu* will guard them."

It was three weeks later that Tony came in

earlier than usual. His face was set, almost grim; the boyishness had faded from his blue eyes; his square chin seemed full of determination.

"He is going," said Julie, and coaxed a smile to her face as she went to take his order.

He told her when she brought his omelette—mushroom omelette, cooked to a turn; her hand shook a little as she put down his plate.

"I'm going to drive a car," he said—"pick up the wounded, do transport work—anything they want. It'll be good-bye, Julie."

"Ah, *oui, monsieur*." Julie's fingers twisted nervously at the edge of her muslin apron. "You are English, and what you call it—a sport? And, *folle que je suis*, you have no pepper with your omelette," and she sped off to the kitchen.

"You go—when?" she demanded, polishing an already spotless plate, her dark head on one side, the dimple coming and going in her rounded cheek.

The pepper took a long time to find, and Tony had almost finished his omelette, and was pining for coffee when Julie returned. She fetched him a cup, then began to set out an adjoining table with a large and unnecessary amount of silver and crockery.

"You go—when?" she demanded, polishing an already spotless plate, her dark head on one side, the dimple coming and going in her rounded cheek.

"To-morrow," Tony replied joyously; "that is if my things are ready. At present my entire wardrobe is reposing in the centre of the studio floor—most of my socks are in holes, and I've hardly a button to my name."

"*Mais vous êtes un drôle.*" Julie's hands flew to her hips; a wistful, expectant look stole into her face. "I can sew," she volunteered, "and you cannot go in rags."

"Julie, you're a trump!" Tony jumped up, all the old elation in his voice and manner. "If you could come round with your needle and cotton or whatever you fill up holes with, I'll be everlastingly grateful."

"I will come," she assured him, "*à six heures*."

When he had gone she cleared his table, handling the china with reverent touch—it was ordinary china enough, blue-patterned and rather thick—but to her it was hallowed. *He* had used it—and she was going to mend his socks.

Six o'clock found Julie climbing the stairs to the big studio, whose windows looked down into a courtyard shaded by green lime trees. Tony was on his knees on the floor, ramming clothes and boots into a big leather trunk.

"I'll leave this here," he said; "that's my kit," pointing to a pile of garments on the big Turkish hearthrug.

Julie fell upon them with little cries of dismay, thrusting her hands into the socks in eager search for holes. In a moment she had whisked out her needle and wool and

sunk down among the blue cushions on the very luxurious Chesterfield.

"I shall sew for hours," she said with a sigh of supreme content.

"Then, if you don't mind, I'll run out and get one or two things I've forgotten. Good-bye." Tony laid a hand on her shoulder—then he was gone.

As Julie worked, her quick, black eyes took in her surroundings. For a moment she put down her darning; even to her inexperienced gaze the room presented an appearance of luxury. Magnificent rugs strewed the floor; a dim blue curtain wonderfully embroidered hid the door; there were bits of copper, some exquisite pottery—it was an abode quite out of keeping with a decrepit tweed coat and almost heelless socks.

Julie's face was grave as she resumed her darning. Garbed in shabby tweeds, Tony seemed not so much above her own station in life; as the owner of all these treasures, he was immeasurably removed from it. Julie ran over in her mind one or two romances of the Quarter. There was Marie Dublanc, who had married Pierre—they had almost starved until his picture in the Salon last spring claimed attention—and Mignonne, old Antoine's daughter, whose saucy beauty had captured the heart of a scapegrace young American, and who was even now gloriously content in a tiny flat near Notre Dame on a diet of bread and watery *potage*. Julie felt she could be happy in a cow-shed with *Monsieur* Tony. Poverty had no terrors for her; it was riches which might bar the way to happiness.

Presently she finished the socks, and as she laid them reverently on a chair, her eyes fell on the overflowing trunk. There, on top lay something pale lavender in shade, something that glimmered like silk.

Julie stretched out her hand and touched it—it was assuredly silk. She rose and lifted the garment, holding it up by the shoulders—it was a silk shirt, and underneath, in a neat, delicious pile, were others—pale blue, mauve, and white—and clean shirts of any kind were almost as rare in the Quarter as new-laid eggs at the North Pole!

Julie fingered them tenderly, delighting in the soft texture, the while her eyes grew troubled. She took them out one by one—they bore the mark of the most exclusive outfitter in the Rue de la Paix.

Underneath the last one, on the top of some striped pyjamas—also suspiciously silken—lay an envelope. Mechanically she read the name:

THE EARL of EXDALE,

and the address was that of the studio.

She gave a little gasp, and her face paled. There was only one thing to believe—Tony was the Earl of Exdale. And she had pitied his shabby tweeds and given him extra bountiful helpings of soup because she had pictured him always as poor and struggling! Julie put the shirts back in their place, plopped on to the hospitable Chesterfield, and hid her face in the blue cushions.

She was still huddled up on the settee when Tony entered, his arms full of packages, and whistling the Marseillaise. He put down his load and came towards her, standing in front of the sofa with an air that was at once frank and contrite.

"I've got to tell you something, Julie," he said; "you've been such a game little pal, I feel an awful hound for deceiving you. I'm not poor; I've got pots of money, and I came here because I was fed up with society functions and all the rotten round at home. I wore these"—pointing to his deplorable tweeds—"to keep up the illusion. One or two of the fellows know, but they've kept quiet. Fact is, I'm the Earl of Exdale," he finished lamely.

Julie sat up, her feet, in their buckled shoes, planted firmly on the floor, her face pale and wan in the fading light.

"You're a real earl?" she asked in a level, toneless voice.

"Yes." A look of troubled perplexity clouded Tony's handsome face. "Why, Julie, what's the matter?" He sat down beside her and took her cold little hands in his big brown ones.

She only shook her head forlornly.

"What is it, *chérie*?" Tony's voice was very tender, but it was the tenderness one shows to a hurt child, not that of a man for the woman he loves. Julie detected the difference, and her eyelids quivered beneath his gaze.

"It is nothing, *monsieur*, only——"

A sudden fear gripped at the man's heart. Was this grief for him? Had he inadvertently awakened in this impressionable little French girl more than he could ever give? There was real anxiety in his voice as he bent forward to read the truth in her eyes.

"Julie," he said, "you are too brave, too loyal to grieve because I am going to the war. And yet there are tears in your eyes. Tell me, *petite*, are they perhaps because I

Julie put the shirts back in their place, plopped on to the hospitable Chesterfield, and hid her face in the blue cushions.

am not a struggling art student, but rich and an earl?"

Julie's quick brain probed behind the question: she knew that he was striving very honestly to find out whether quite unwittingly he had stolen her heart; he would reproach himself bitterly if he knew that his innocent subterfuge had awakened in her hopes that could never be realised. So she braced herself gamely, that he whom she loved might be at peace.

"*Mais, non, monsieur!*" Julie tilted her chin with a return to her old spontaneous gaiety. "It is good to be an earl, *n'est-ce pas?* I am *triste*, because to-morrow I go to pack for Pierre—Pierre Gaston who keeps the *laiterie* in the Rue de la Grande Chaumière. He goes to fight *pour la patrie*. I wish him to go, and yet I weep. It may be he will never come back." Julie's lips trembled as she rose to her feet.

Tony's face cleared as if by magic; he stood before her, very big and distinguished in spite of his abominable clothes. Silently Julie collected her scissors and thimble and stowed them with her other impedimenta into her little black silk bag. Still in silence she folded up the mended socks and laid them tenderly on the sofa. Then she turned to Tony, winking back the tears from her wistful eyes.

"God bless you, Julie!" he said gently, with a hand on either shoulder, "and the good Pierre."

"*Et vous aussi, monsieur.*" Julie conjured up an April smile. "I shall ask *le bon Dieu* to keep you always safe."

Then he opened the blue-curtained door, and she was gone. And down in the shadowy courtyard she smiled piteously to herself.

"Ah, *les hommes!*" she murmured brokenly to the stars. "How easy it is to fool them! Pierre Gaston—and he has five children and a squint! But it would never have done—he wore silk shirts."

Habitués of the little restaurant at the corner of the Rue de la Grande Chaumière often wonder why the seat by the red-curtained window is always denied to them—kept for someone who never comes.

Perhaps it is the same reason that has made Julie's step less light, her dimples less frequent than of yore. She never enlightens them; it is a secret which she *et le bon Dieu* share together.

Mr. Will Crooks, the genial Member for Woolwich, who contributes the following article, is as popular in the House as in his own constituency, and his speeches are always listened to with attention.

WHAT I THINK OF THE WAR

By

WILL CROOKS

Mr. William Crooks, M.P. for Woolwich, has been known throughout his long and honourable public career as a man of strong convictions. He has never been afraid to speak out when plain-speaking seemed to him necessary. No one will ever forget that dramatic moment when, after the reading of the King's Speech last September, Mr. Crooks led the House of Commons in singing the National Anthem. In this article he has exhibited all that blunt outspokenness typical of the man, and the result is a very striking indictment of the enemy.—Ed. R.M.

A Record in Hypocrisy.

Does anyone like to be bilked? After being "had" by the nimble-fingered performer of the purse trick, the card-sharper, or the welsher, there comes a time when, broke to the world, you want to stand with your face to the wall and growl: "Well, I have been a darned fool!"

But supposing for many years you honestly try to chum up with a man and prove to him by all manner of self-abnegation how much you desire his friendship. You help him to the best of your ability, and in business matters make things easy for him until he gets rich and arrogant on your unselfishness.

Supposing all this, and knowing full well the honesty of your intentions, you discover that he is making serious mischief between you and your neighbours, and, finally, after protesting his great love for you at innumerable private and public functions, you find he is on the way to smash you up and murder your youngsters, how would you feel?

You would undoubtedly decide that the "darned fool" period had overrun itself, and be off to meet him with all your former friendly feelings goading you to put an end to the rotter before he does any further mischief.

It is possible to find individuals bad enough for anything, but it has been left for Germany to create a world's record in national deceit and devilish hypocrisy.

Germany's Lust of Blood.

Like a few more hundreds of thousands of Britishers who have been suffering from delusions and dimness of vision, this war, with its treachery, depravity, debauchery, hatred, and the frenzied delight of a Germany revelling in a lust of blood, has almost shattered my belief in the restraining power of civilisation, Christian or otherwise, and because of the rudeness of my awakening I mean to make all those within the reach of my voice sit up and rub the dust out of their eyes.

The admission may be, and indeed is, very humiliating, but it is the gospel truth when I frankly admit that I have been bilked, and, worst of all, have, innocently enough, helped to bilk others. I am going to spend the remaining years of my public life in clearing the air. My "darned fool" stage is ended.

Since last August my stock of adjectives, expletives, and superlatives has been worn very threadbare, but I am still unable to express with sufficient vigour my hatred of the malignant, bloodthirsty militarism of Germany. Unfortunately, the fiendish gang primarily responsible can shelter their carcases behind the guns of Krupp, whilst their death-stricken victims in the fighting line pay the awful penalty of a policy of world-power born in Hell and perfected in Potsdam.

The Medicine of War.

"God will see to it," says that High Priest, Treitschke, "that war always recurs as a drastic medicine for the human race."

Some of us, before the war, knew that all the lunatics in the world were not in asylums and preferred to treat such ebullitions as a spasm of dementia confined to a select few Germaniacs. Little did we realise how deliberately a large and prosperous nation could be rushed like swine into a bottomless pit of infamy.

The devilish meanness of the preparations for wholesale murder is now too exasperatingly apparent for me to be patient under. The drastic medicine of war was being mixed for us and what were we doing? Deputations were going from England continually, carrying to the German people friendly greetings, and many of us were enthusiastically orating upon the divine thesis of International Peace.

In some of my many recruiting speeches I have recounted that on one occasion I stood up at Cologne and proposed the Health of the Kaiser, and the incident is an awful weight on my conscience.

On the side of Germany there had been the formation of friendship leagues, peace associations and on the Terrace of the House of Commons we have held out the right hand of fellowship to hundreds of German workmen whom we thought to be as sincere as we were trustful. Yet behind it all was the hypocrisy of organised murder, and for what? Merely for more power and more wealth.

Poisoning the Sources of Education.

Let me quote here the opinion of Ford Madox Hueffer, a writer who is more intimately acquainted with Germany than most journalists. He says:

"I commit myself with all the sense of responsibility that a man can feel, and, with a sense of pain as if I were striking a much-loved person across the face with a whip, to these two propositions. The sole immediate cause for the declaration of war by this country was the violation by Germany of the neutrality of Belgium; the sole person who is responsible for this war, for all these deaths, and for the corruption of the kindly hearts of the German people is the Emperor William.

"I think I can prove step by step, and word for word, the whole of the accusation against the Emperor William . . . I state, after a long study of the German Imperial constitution and of the events that have occurred since the accession of the Emperor William, that the despotism of this Emperor, imaginative, romantic, possibly good-hearted and generous in himself—that his despotism has been the most formidable the world has ever known—all the more formidable on account of its intangibility, and all the more unshaken because of its mask of constitutionalism.

"Other despots have brought out that which was best in their peoples, since by acts of tyranny they have nerved their subjects to resistance and to struggles for freedom. The Emperor William, alone in history, has, by poisoning the very sources of his peoples' education, corrupted his whole nation by the promise of wealth, and of wealth by means of waging war."

Bilking the Universe.

There is still in Germany one man at least—Liebnecht—who can tell the truth. He maintains with heroic courage that this war is one of aggression, and promoted by military and governing despotism. But what of the others? Take the professors, Haeckel, and the prophets.

Here we have a specimen of supposed intellectuals who, mainly because they were Germans, were gradually allowed to dominate the opinions of the scientific world. Their training would lead one to suspect a capacity for sifting evidence and extracting the truth, yet as far as we know they have to a man ranged themselves on the side of militarism. If their usual researches are based on the same methods, how they, too, have bilked the universe!

Science and Militarism! What a combination! Left to themselves the professors would have abolished the Fatherhood of God, and the military would have smashed the Brotherhood of Man.

We have, at a terrible cost, to fight for Liberty and Freedom against this combination, and when it comes to fighting, old age has it disadvantages. It makes one regret being born so long ago, otherwise I should be in the trenches with my recruits, and be spared the heartache of seeing them going where I cannot follow.

But fighting for Liberty and Freedom is not a new experience for Englishmen.

If there is a man still at large who ever thought we ought not to be in this war I should like to know what he thinks now. Does he still think we could have kept out of it? I do not.

A Gift of Priceless Value.

People talk of living and working as well and as happily under the Kaiser as under George V. Let me remind them that there were four millions of Socialist working men in Germany when the war began. What influence had they in their own country against Prussian Militarism? What influence do they think the working men of this country would have if the Kaiser came here and conquered?

Here to-day we enjoy liberty, but at times we are inclined to hold that liberty lightly and cheaply. Why? Because we did not fight for it. Our fathers and our grandfathers suffered on the battlefield and on the scaffold in order to hand down to us a gift of priceless value. We, too, have more than a life interest in that gift. The children coming after us are entitled to the full results of our sufferings and our victories.

Never before in my life have I advocated war, and my public appearances *against* the Boer war resulted in so many lively experiences that I know the brutal iniquities of violence.

The painfulness of industrial strife is bad enough and is always remembered by those who, like myself, have gone through the mill. I have had my share of suffering.

During my recruiting campaign I have visited towns through which, years ago, I tramped homeless, hungry, and workless. Every employer's hand was against me because of my continual fight for Trades Unionism. I was paying the price of Liberty. And when I looked around some of the crowded halls and saw the eager faces in front of me, I asked myself dare I urge these men to surrender themselves for Our Country? Knowing, as I did, the possible cost, the remembrance of past and present days sent the hot blood surging through my veins.

England's Answer.

The answer was never in doubt. Fight on, even though England itself be smashed into pieces and every man, woman, and child should be hustled into eternity. Aye, fight on, and always fight on rather than our Freedom should be trampled over by the modern Hun.

On one occasion, tired and weary from much speaking and travelling, I was thinking over the few headings of the lecture I had been billed to deliver. The crowds had gathered, and to my over-wrought nerves seemed bigger than ever, and I became painfully conscious of my responsibilities. Gradually the sweet music of the choir attracted my attention. The words were an inspiration.

For the love of fatherland and freedom,
For truth and right stand in the van,
Fling wealth and pomp to those who need them,
Be staunch and bold and play the man.

I didn't make a speech that night. I just talked. It was one of the most successful meetings I ever had.

The Message of the Flag.

Outside my front window hangs the Union Jack showing sad signs of wear and tear. The children stand under it shouting a perverted nursery rhyme.

Kaiser Bill went up the hill
To see the dreadful slaughter;
He fell down and broke his crown,
And so he jolly well orter!

That flag is going to hang there until the Kaiser and his horde of Huns shoot it and me to atoms, or, better still, until the victory for Freedom is won and peace is signed.

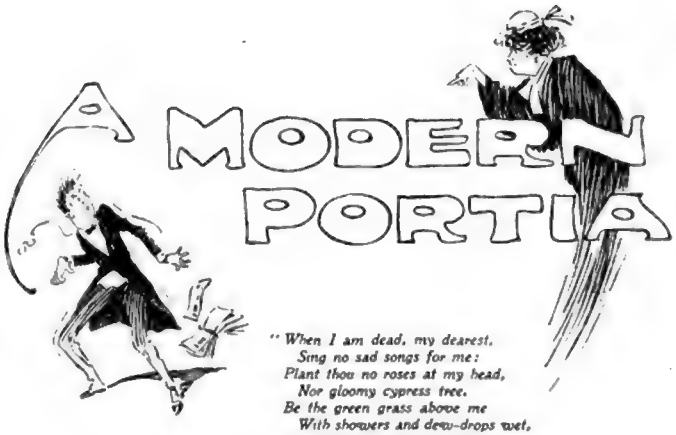
And we are going to win!

We've shut the gates by Dover Straits and the north where the tide runs free,
Cheek by jowl our watch-dogs prowl—grey hulls in a greyer sea,
And the prayer that England prays to-night,
O Lord of our destiny
As the foam of our plunging prows is white
We have stood for Peace and we war for Right.
God give us Victory!

What do I think of the War? Well, as the costermonger said when he upset his barrow of fish in a pool of mud,

"There ain't no bloomin' word for it."

Will Crooks



"When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me:
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor gloomy cypress tree.
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dew-drops wet,
And if thou wilt—remember!
And if thou wilt—forget!"

By Edwin M. La Roche.

I.

At ten o'clock the sick woman showed no signs of going to bed; at eleven she was wide awake to the point of uneasy watchfulness. The nurse had long since arranged the medicines, made her last entries on the chart and bidden her patient good-night.

With the Indian patience of one caught in the jaws of a fatal disease, the handsome invalid drew a writing-tablet on to the flat arm of her chair and wrote steadily, tucking the filled sheets into the bosom of her gown.

Then the mantelpiece clock struck twelve sharply, and she lay back with a sigh, an expectant look coming into her deep eyes. And, with the twelfth chime ringing from the clock, a motor-car drew up in front of the darkened house, and three figures quickly alighted on the curb. All three were dressed severely in black, with modishly cut clothes, gloves, shoes—the externals of gentility. One, by her easy poise and graceful outline, was a woman.

The three midnight visitors ascended the brown stone steps, and the woman fumbled awkwardly with an unfamiliar key.

The hand of the man carrying a black bag reached out to press the bell-button.

"Don't do that," said the woman; "my instructions were to come absolutely in privacy."

"Very well, madam," he said stiffly.

The woman turned and faced him.

"Dr. Carpel, I don't want anyone to think I was foolish enough to arrange such a queer appointment. I am under rigid instructions." The speaker fitted the key into the lock, swung into the hall, switched on the light, and the two men entered.

"Just a moment, gentlemen—I'll see if my client is ready for you."

As she was speaking the young woman darted up the stairs. Presently, she came down part way, smiling, and the others knew that they were to go up.

"And so you really are Doctor Carpel?" the clear voice of the sick woman inquired, a moment later. "Pardon me for

saying anything so evident, but I had expected to meet a much older man."

"If my seeming youth offends you," began the doctor, smiling evenly, "I will take great pleasure in laying it aside." And he finished by staring at her strangely, with the unuttered thought: "Why on earth am I here?"

"Miss Vincent and your assistant will excuse us, I'm sure—she will read some of my papers in the library while you interview me."

The brain specialist was studying her closely—the expression of her eyes, the enunciation of her words, the play of her lips. She watched him as closely and took it with the greatest of good-nature. All at once, he saw that she knew that he was gauging her, and he coloured and bowed instinctively.

A half-hour passed in conversation between them—a most extraordinary talk, couched in everyday words and on commonplace things, yet the woman knew that he was measuring her for her sanity, and he knew that she knew it.

"Well, doctor," she said at last, almost impatiently, "have you had enough of this? Are you prepared to witness my will?"

"I'll be as frank as you are—yes. I'll stake my reputation on it. You are a most unusual woman."

Mrs. Norman smiled. "I don't take that for flattery—I know it's so."

She pressed the button ringing in the library, and almost by magic the young woman and the doctor's assistant appeared.

"You're ready to spring at me," Mrs. Norman smiled, "and I have good news. Doctor Carpel is ready to witness my will."

Miss Vincent drew a legal paper from her coat-pocket, indicated the place for her client to sign, and passed the fresh signature over to Doctor Carpel, who rapidly signed as witness. His assistant's signature followed, and Mrs. Norman, who had watched the simple process with fever-lit eyes, breathed like a runner at the end of his spurt.

"It's very informal, after all." The girl attorney's voice first broke the silence. "I wish all my clients were as methodical as you."

Again a silence fell upon the midnight company. The doctor's low laugh interrupted.

"I must be off," he said, rising, "and I am everlastingly indebted to our hostess for this pleasant, if not usual, evening. May I again offer Miss Vincent the use of my car?"

The girl coloured ever so slightly.

"Our business is finished," she announced perfunctorily; "nothing remains but to hope that Mrs. Norman may outlive, in great measure, the usefulness of this document."

His fingers fastened on a shoe, and by tugging fiercely, he succeeded in dragging his assistant out from under the car. (P. 430 col 1)

And then, as her sure fingers buttoned her coat, she gave way to the woman in her, by stooping swiftly and brushing the sick woman's forehead with her lips.

In a minute the three were below and had entered the doctor's car.

The night overhead, that had been ushered in with a clear moon and a spangle of stars, had turned to a raw sea-fog that flung its dripping length upon the pavement and turned the street lamps to blear-eyed sentinels.

Doctor Carpel's hands guided the long, deep-breathed car. Sometimes, out of the fog, a vehicle, passing the opposite way, would loom up suddenly and pass by silently, with only inches to spare between wheels.

"A most unusual evening"—the doctor's voice sounded far off and thin to his seat-mate—"that has given me the rare pleasure of meeting you."

"You speak as if that were the main purpose of our visit."

The doctor coughed, and the machine swerved a few inches. Her hand involuntarily sought his arm.

"Don't be afraid," he muttered: "your control is almost as remarkable as mine."

"Good heavens! Jump!"

The words were a second too late. With a heart-rending throb, the powerful car careened on two wheels, hung dizzily over an open ditch in the street, then crashed to the arteries of pipe some ten feet below.

In mockery, a dingy, red lantern slid off the earth pile and toppled after them, casting a feeble glow on the twisted car.

Doctor Carpel was the first one to move. He crawled from the wreckage and stood a moment, dazed and helpless from shock. The import of the disaster broke upon him, and, with palsied hands, he bent down, groping for what of life might remain under the steel monster. His fingers fastened on a shoe, and, by tugging fiercely, he succeeded in dragging his assistant out from under the car. He was, as the doctor suspected, as crushed as though he had been tossed from a roof.

Again the doctor summoned up his courage, and his hands groped—this time to fix upon a woman's coat. In a trice he had freed her from the car and placed his hand over her heart. It was beating, with the scant feebleness of a run-down clock.

"It's a question of minutes, a stimulant, and the resources of a surgery." He watched, peering up into the ghostly fog. "What a death!—thrust into a hole in the street—unfended save by a helpless doctor——

"Help, help, help!" His voice sounded like a waif's in the night.

Then a glad, distant sound came down to him, the clatter of an ambulance, and he almost swooned with the reaction its message brought.

II.

Weeks flitted by, months flicked themselves off the calendar, and, with the swift passage of time, the emergency ward of the City Hospital came no more to know its most urgent patient. The time had come when Isabel Vincent, with her shattered frame starting to knit together again, had been picked up and wheeled off to a secluded room.

And with the face of the man bending over her, the dark, fixed face that had become an integral part of her resurrection, her hand sought his and was immeasurably comforted by its glow of warmth and strength.

"So it has come to this?" She said the words half to herself.

"Yes, Isabel. I stood in the path of death and harried him while the hospital staff worked over you."

"You forget the long nights—I remember only your face alone."

"Ah! is it memory or love that paints itself in your eyes?"

"Have it either way." The first, new pink found its way into her cheeks. "I feel that you love me."

His strong hand closed over hers, and she lay in comforted silence.

In an hour she awoke.

"I'm stronger already," she said; "with your love comes strength. Have I slept long?"

"No longer than my hand has—it's quite lifeless."

"Then take it back," she smiled; "I want only the wilful part of you—the indomitable face of my dreams."

One could hardly believe such invalid words an engagement, yet each took it as such, and, with the passage of convalescent days—days of close communion for the brilliant girl and the famous specialist—the whispered word passed through the hospital that they were engaged to be married.

When the day came that Isabel was able to walk and was sent back to her home, the wonder of her love-affair began to dawn upon her

And when the dark, compelling eyes of the doctor faced her daily, her soul felt only delight at their glance. She loved him; she felt it in her deepest core, yet her mind revolted at this surrender of herself.

Soon, she thought, she would be mixing and battling with other people again, and her judgment would run clear.

On the day that Isabel Vincent prepared to journey to her office and to pick up again the tangled reins of her practice, she had never felt more physically fit. Yet her nerves were not quite prepared for the shock that gripped them with eerie suddenness.

It was in a motor 'bus, and two ladies sat in a cross-seat with their backs to her.

"Yes, he's engaged to marry Isabel Vincent, the talented and beautiful young woman lawyer."

"Do you suppose she knows he's gambled away everything he has?"

"You never can tell—what won't a girl do in the heat of infatuation?"

There was a pause, and Isabel listened, fascinated.

"It's a pity—they say she's awfully nice."

The 'bus stopped, and she swung off, almost timidly, at her corner. A fiery, wavering path seemed to stretch before her; on the one side, love, the best of her, holding forth for this man; and on the other,

Isabel bowed to her smiling office staff, and shut her private door behind her.

doubt, disdain, revolt creeping up with sickening strength.

Isabel bowed to her smiling office staff, and shut her private door behind her.

"Well, it's come at last," she said half-aloud, "my trial of myself. Whatever the value of tattle in a 'bus, the thing has to be faced."

She flung her gloves on the desk and stared hard at them, her eyes gazing unmeaningly before her.

III.

Doctor Carpel stood in the presence of Mrs. Norman, with the light of pity shining from his dark eyes. It was night, and, save for him, she lay alone, dying.

A shaken, fearful voice over the telephone had bidden him hurry to her bedside. And he stood there now, counting her measured breaths.

Not even her wealth could save her, he thought, nor could the bulwarks of her bank-account stand between her and the Reaper. And the strangeness of it all—the whim of a remarkable woman! When he arrived, not even her most confidential friend and agent, Isabel Vincent, was near her. It was almost a mockery, too, that Helen, her beloved niece and principal beneficiary, was absent from the great house.

At the dying woman's faint gesture, he bent close to her.

"It is—my wish to go thus—alone and without pain—to my——"

A fit of violent coughing seized her and shook her transparent shoulders. Her eyes shone supernaturally.

"Over there, in the desk—a secret drawer—bank withdrawals—oh, dear, let me finish!"

"Yes, yes," he said. "I understand everything."

She dropped her eyelids helplessly, and he saw that the spark of life was almost quenched.

"Quick—get——"

Doctor Carpel sprang to the massive piece of furniture and ran deft fingers over its array of drawers and compartments. A little brass knob among a dozen looked significant to him, and he twisted and turned it, until he heard a spring uncatch, and a secret drawer lay open to him.

He glanced over his shoulder. The woman on the bed lay deathly still.

There they were, naked to his eyes, a sheaf of bank notes—a princely fortune, judging by the number of them.

Doctor Carpel picked up the packet, weighed it in his hand, closed the secret drawer, then calmly stowed the packet in his frock-coat pocket. No one else knew the secret of the desk, he felt positive, and here was a new lease of life—fortune and fame all ready to his hand.

He turned his head again, and a chill ran down his spine. His forehead broke out in clammy beads of moisture. Surely, surely the dead woman had not moved her hand?

With a supreme effort of will, he crossed the room and took her hand in his. It was as cold as ice. And, looking up, he saw that her jaw had fallen ever so slightly.

With the incomprehensible wings of fear fluttering round and about him, his shaking hand withdrew from hers, and he crossed the room, clutching his hand to the money in his pocket. He plucked open the door fiercely, to shut it behind him with the noiselessness of an undertaker.

Then, for the first time, he caught his breath with a deep inrush of air. The house was buried in sleep. Nothing but the silent stairs and the street-door lay ahead of him.

IV.

Isabel Vincent sat immersed in the papers and pass-books of her lifelong friend and benefactress. By her side crouched the little niece of the dead woman.

"Strange, Helen! A record of years of bank-deposits, the vouchers to correspond with each withdrawal, and, in the end, only a working balance. I can't understand it—where did all her money go?"

"Aunt Caroline was very good-hearted—perhaps she gave it away."

"Nonsense! Her will shows that she intended to make some large bequests, with you as the principal beneficiary."

Isabel thumbed over the pile of vouchers again.

"Here and here and here!" she exclaimed, sorting out a group of large amounts. "Less than six months ago she drew out over twenty thousand pounds."

Helen's young eyes grew wide.

"Did you ever know her keep any large sums in the house?" Isabel questioned.

"Only enough to pay the bills."

"I thought so." Isabel's brows were furrowed with thought. "That big desk of hers—was there ever any money kept in it?"

"You ought to know," reminded Helen; "you looked through it so carefully."

"Think Helen; papers, notes, receipts, anything——"

The young girl laughed teasingly. "Auntie was very queer—you can't guess what I found—a hide-and-seek drawer in the desk. And I found something else, too."

"What?"

"This!" The girl held up a crushed and faded rose before Isabel's eyes.

"Ah!" The woman in Isabel sighed out loud, but her mind ran keen and true to the scent of the faded flower.

"Leave it with me, Helen; you have helped me wonderfully."

And once more alone, she drew the flower to her lips and held it there. Then, suddenly, she cast it on the flat desk and studied it.

"His rose," she said, as if forcing a confession; "the kind he always wore. Alas! I must follow the clue wherever it may lead."

V.

The court-room was crowded with fashionable people at the moment when Isabel Vincent, junior counsel for the prosecution, arose to confront Doctor Victor Carpel.

Three days before his trial, the gifted young woman had visited the public prosecutor and had been closeted with him for over an hour. When she left his office, ashen-coloured as a sea-wraith, she took with her a brief.

The beginning of the trial had been decidedly in favour of the famous doctor. No one had seen him go to the dead woman's house; no one had seen him leave it. The large returns of his private practice put him beyond the needs of further money. He had never had access to the home of the deceased, except as a rather unusual witness to her will.

It was, then, a complete surprise to the Press and to many members of the Bar, when Isabel Vincent rose up to cross-examine.

There was a hasty consultation of Doctor Carpel's counsel, and a chorus of animated whispers among the spectators. Surely the doctor's *fiancée*, who had sat within the rail so nobly and quietly during the trial, was going to become his chief witness?

Doctor Carpel walked calmly to the witness-box, a rose crimsoning the lapel of his frock-coat. His eyes met the young woman's squarely, and he seemed to be plumbing the depths of her heart.

"Doctor Carpel, where did you go previous to your visit to the Harwich Club on the night of August 17th?"

The accused measured the deep rings under his questioner's eyes before replying.

"Nowhere; I went there directly from my house."

"You did not answer a telephone message?"

"I may have; I get a great many."

"You evade my question. Did you not make a visit in answer to a telephone message?"

The doctor's hand toyed nervously with his rose.

"I cannot recall; my practice is very extensive."

"Ah! then let me refresh your memory as to whom you went to see and what you did while there."

A profound silence fell upon the court-room. Even the judge leant forward, showing a marked interest.

"Is it not true, Doctor Carpel, that you went to the home of Mrs. Norman?" Isabel went on rapidly. "When you arrived at the house, you found the front-door unlocked. A minute afterwards, you stood over the bed of a dying woman. No one was about—in her last few words she told you that."

She paused and looked straight into the eyes of her now cowering victim. . . . The urbane look had fled from his face, leaving it a thing of shrunken features.

The woman leant forward like some animal gathered for a spring. Her voice grew metallically clear.

"The sufferer asked you to get some money from her desk—a secret place—and you sought it out and found it just as you thought her soul fled. Is not this true, Doctor Carpel?"

She paused and looked straight into the eyes of her now cowering victim.

Doctor Carpel crouched deep in the box. The urbane look had fled from his face, leaving it a thing of shrunken features. The eyes searching his seemed to grow luminous, the size of twin lighthouse rays.

"And suppose I should inform you," the relentless Portia went on, "that at that very moment when you thought she had breathed her last, she made one supreme effort, as she saw what you were doing, and, as you looked, you thought *her hand moved!* Is not that true, Doctor Carpel?

"And suppose I tell you that, in that supreme effort, she wrote this, *this*, Doctor Carpel, this very paper that I hold in my hand, while you were putting that money in your pocket! And that when you were scurrying from the room of death that hand rose up again, and in its fingers was clutched *—this rose!*"

Silhouetted against the daylight that streamed in through a large window of the court-room, the black-robed, white-faced attorney stood, every eye in the room riveted to hers. She held out her hand, and in it were a scrap of paper and a faded, leafless rose. A pause—then a flutter everywhere.

"Ah!"

With one breath, the court-room heaved a sigh of great relief. Doctor Carpel, his guilty face ghastly, had swooned. His conviction was assured.

And from the inexorable eyes of his accuser, now screened with heavy lashes, came a tear!

(The foregoing story is one quite apart from the usual run of fiction, and the Editor would be interested to know his readers' opinion of it. Accordingly, he is offering ten silver pencil-cases to the ten readers who send in the most interesting opinions. They should be written on postcards and must reach this office not later than March 22nd, 1915.)

DEFENCE, NOT DEFIANCE

By Professor W. H. Garrud.

(1) (2)

DEFENCE FOR KNIFE ATTACK.

(1) My assailant has made a lunge at me with a knife in his right hand. I quickly step towards him with my left leg, raising my left arm to parry the blow.

(2) Without an instant's pause I then step forward with my right leg, at the same time swinging my right arm up and under my assailant's right arm, and, jabbing the crook of his elbow with my fist to bend the arm, I catch my own right hand with my left hand and twist his arm by raising my right elbow and pressing down on his wrist with my right hand, assisted by my left. The pain on the elbow-joint is now so great that my assailant drops the knife. If this is done with a jerk the arm will be broken.

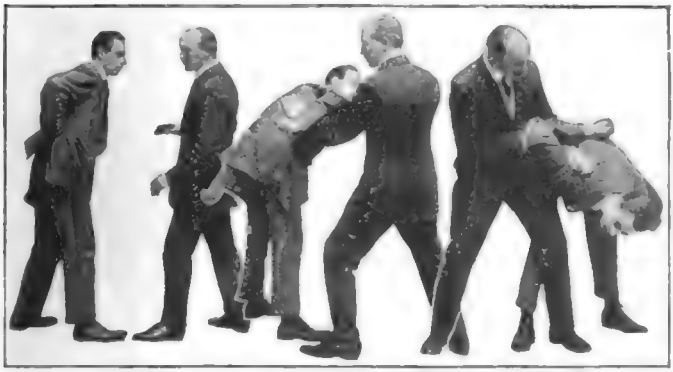
(1) (2) (3)

FOILING A STRANGLE GRIP FROM THE REAR.

(1) My assailant has caught me round the throat from the rear with his right arm, with the intention of strangling me.

(2) I immediately raise my arms and grip his right arm at the elbow and shoulder with both hands; then I quickly bend my legs to get sufficient leverage——

(3) I do not remain in this position more than a second, but instantly straighten them again and bend my body forward, thus levering my assailant over on to my back and forward over my head to the ground. This is a violent throw, and unless my assailant knows the art of "Breakfall" he will land on his head and probably get it broken.



(1) (2) (3)

RESISTANCE AGAINST A REVOLVER ATTACK.

(1) My assailant makes a movement as though to pull a revolver out of his hip pocket with his right hand.

(2) I immediately step up to him with my left leg and grasp his elbow, [illegible] placing my fingers round it, elbow joint from above, and at the same time slide my left arm between my assailant's arm and body, and place it on the small of his back.

(3) I then make a right turn of my body so as to face in the same direction as my assailant, and bring my left leg round to my rear. At the same time as I turn my body I pull strongly on his elbow joint and slip my left hand up to his shoulder, catching hold of his coat. This has the effect of bending his arm and forcing his hand up along the spine. I then step in front of his right leg with my left leg to prevent his turning, and press down towards the ground on his elbow, thus bringing a great strain upon the [illegible] shoulder.

(1) (2) (3)

DEFENCE FOR RIGHT KICK AT STOMACH.

(1) I have reason to believe that my assailant is going to kick me. The best position to assume in this case is a half side one, with the left leg half forward, and the hands over one another covering the lower part of the body. My assailant has aimed a kick at my stomach with his right foot. I immediately turn a little to my right and catch his ankle with both hands.

(2) Without pausing I change the position of my right hand and place my left hand on the back of my assailant's right shoulder, at the same time stepping up with my right leg and raising my left leg, bringing it well across the front of his left thigh.

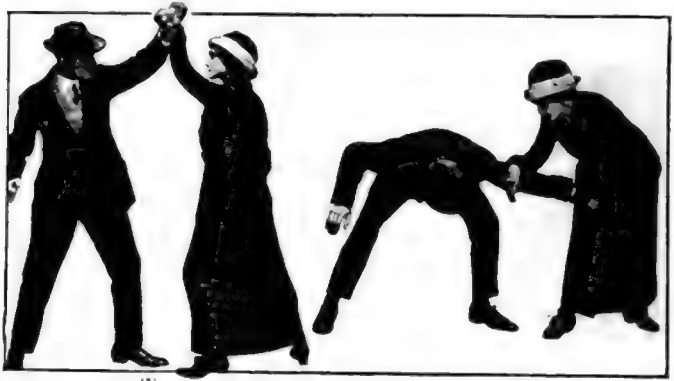
(3) I then give my assailant's shoulder a vigorous push forward, at the same time kicking back against his left thigh, and throw him forward flat on to his face. The instant he reaches the ground I place my left knee on the top of his right knee—just at the back—and bring all my weight to bear on it. At the same time I bend his leg by pulling up on his ankle and sliding my right hand up to his toes, force his foot over my knee and towards his back, thus bringing a great strain upon the knee. I steady myself with my left hand in the small of his back.

(1) (2)

TO GUARD AGAINST A BLOW AT THE HEAD.

(1) My assailant has aimed a blow at my head with a stick, which I parry, by crossing my wrists so that my assailant's right wrist is caught in the fork formed by my crossed wrists.

(2) I immediately make a right-about-turn, at the same time gripping his wrist with both hands and slipping my left shoulder under his elbow joint. I then pull down upon his wrist, thus securing the straight arm lock which, if done with a jerk, will break the arm at the elbow. It is very important that the assailant's arm should be turned so that the palm of his hand is upward.



(1) (2)

LADY'S DEFENCE AGAINST A BLOW AT FACE.

(1) The assailant has aimed a blow at the lady's face with his left fist, and the lady has parried the blow with her left forearm.

(2) Immediately after guarding the blow the lady catches her assailant's wrist and makes a wide step backward with her left leg, at the same time giving a slight twist to his arm so as to bring the elbow joint upward. She then presses upon the joint with her right forearm, thus securing an elbow lock by which it is possible to break the arm.

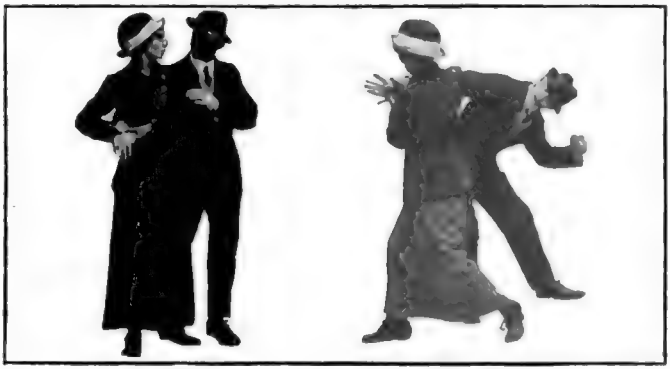
(1) (2)

LADY'S DEFENCE AGAINST A THIEF.

(1) The thief has crept up behind the lady and caught the handle of her bag, and the lady has turned her head in time to see the action.

(2) The lady immediately turns round to her right, and, still retaining her grasp on her bag, places her right hand on the front of her assailant's shoulder and gives his forward leg a back-kick with her right leg just at the bend of his knee, resulting in a throw on the back of his head.

A Jujitsu "lock" can be applied after the throw, if it is necessary, whereby the lady could hold the thief until a policeman appeared; or she could break his arm.



(1) (2)

LADY'S DEFENCE FOR ARM ROUND WAIST.

(1) The lady's assailant has placed his right arm round her waist and she has immediately seized his hand by placing her thumbs on the back of the hand and the fingers along the palm, thus gripping the hand over both edges.

(2) Having secured the grip, the lady immediately makes a right-about-turn, twisting her assailant's arm, raising her right arm and passing it over his arm, and twisting his hand round by pressing upon the nerves between the bones of the hand. The continuation of this method is a further turn by the lady and a further twist upon her assailant's hand, and a pressure inward towards his forearm, which results in a wrist-lock sufficient to break the wrist.

The Cult of the Khaki

By Rosemary North.

Hero worship is as inevitable to the average girl as the measles. The man in khaki is the latest victim, and the following article shows how adoration for "Tommy" may have a most beneficial influence on the girl of the present day.

The habit of hero worship has been indulged in by girls ever since prehistoric times, when they probably lined up clad in their Sunday skins to watch the champion stone-slinger enter his cave. The girl of the Georgian period took the highwayman for her hero, and cherished secret hopes of a romantic meeting, when out of consideration for her youth and beauty, he should lay aside his pistol on condition that she danced with him in the moonlight.

Later came the era of the *matinée* girl who dwelt perpetually in the front row of the pit and courted pneumonia at the stage-door that haply she might catch a fleeting glimpse of some dashing actor whose stage love-making had enthralled her heart. Of late years the aviator has to some extent supplanted the actor, and coveys of eager damsels throng the flying grounds to watch with frenzied joy while their favourite airman hazards his life with gallant nonchalance.

The death knell of all these heroes has been rung, for the man in khaki now occupies the stage. This is the day of the war girl, nor is it the few impressionable damsels who indulge in the cult of the khaki—all the girls in the country are at the present moment vieing with one another in adulation.

The *matinée* idol has been dethroned; his photographs no longer obscure the wallpaper of the present-day girl's bedroom; instead, pictures of war heroes occupy the place of honour, the flags of the Allies in miniature fluttering bravely above them.

With this new form of hero worship a fresh element has been introduced; hitherto it was a purely selfish emotion with self-gratification as its sole object. But the cult of the khaki

Unlike the *matinée* idol, Tommy Atkins is in our midst, and far from being unapproachable, is only too delighted to bask in the smiles of the modern maiden.

brings out other traits; the object of adoration is no longer unapproachable, but in our very midst, and, moreover, in need of service which everyone can render.

The tendency among the modern girl has been to regard man chiefly as a purveyor of pleasure; now she sees in him the defender of his country, the protector who stands between her and the fate meted out to the women of gallant Belgium. There is less selfishness in her point of view; he is no longer her hewer of wood and drawer of water, a handy escort, and bringer of gifts—he belongs to the country, and is only hers that she may give him to the Empire.

Whereas the worship of some dashing actor or intrepid airman awoke only superficial feelings, the admiration for Tommy Atkins awakens qualities long dormant in the up-to-date girl's heart. Girls whose only attempts at needlework have been confined to embroidering lack-lustre cushions, and who hardly know calico from flannelette, are learning to wield the needle and to cut out wearable garments both for the troops and for those who are up against hard times because of the war. Knitting was almost a lost art, but the needs of the soldiers have revived it, and girls who were wont to do great things with a golf-club are now mastering the intricacies of purl and plain at an amazing rate.

For years there have been latent powers in the modern girl which she has never dreamt of developing, talents which she never thought of turning to account. Now the round of dances, whist-drives, and *matinées* has been swept away—there is work to be done, and to her credit, be it said, she has shown herself perfectly willing to do it. The girl of the day is no longer a giddy, gad-about young person; war has had a sobering effect even on her, and she is beginning to find the amazing happiness which comes from being useful. Deep down in the heart of every woman, whether she be old or young, is the craving to be of use to someone; perhaps she has never suspected it, but it is there all the same.

Now that craving is being satisfied, and girls who

Doris was a butterfly little soul, who spent her evenings before a blazing fire, until the needs of three soldiers picketed near the house roused her to minister to their comfort

Clare had never had a chance to shine until the wool fever set in, and her skill at knitting made her a valuable ally to her sisters and their fashionable friends.

have been hitherto quite content to be purely decorative, are waking up to the fact that, at a crisis, rosy cheeks and golden hair are of less value than a quick brain and skilful fingers. They are learning to subordinate their own comfort to the urgent needs of the times.

Take the case of Doris, a butterfly little person, whose home was in Essex, a bleak and lonely spot where, on a cold winter's night, the wind blew icy across the wide river that flowed by the garden wall. Doris hated the cold, and when the lamps were lit and the curtains drawn, her idea of bliss was to sit before the blazing fire with a frivolous book and a supply of chocolate creams.

In normal times it is doubtful if anything short of an earthquake would have availed to move her, but the news that three soldiers were picketed all night half-a-mile down the road set her comparing her own luxurious quarters with their comfortless ones. Nor did it end at pity; once stirred to compassion Doris' sympathy took practical form. Every evening she sallied forth, facing the stinging blast or pitiless rain and the black and lonely road, to carry a big Thermos filled with hot cocoa to the shivering soldiers.

It was a simple enough proceeding, but it meant sacrificing her own comfort; nor was it actuated by romantic notions, for they were ordinary enough "Tommies," and at first a trifle suspicious of the kindly intention. Granted that it was a small sacrifice to make, the fact remains that it *was* a sacrifice, and as such, an important step in the right direction for such a selfish soul as Doris.

If the need for service brings out the latent skill and capabilities of many hitherto superficial girls, it also shows them their limitations, and it gives the homely girl, who is skilled in housewifely arts, a chance to score over her more brilliant sister. An expensive education and society attainments are not necessary to enable a girl to make shirts or knit mufflers, and the factory girl, who has long fathomed the mysteries of purl and plain, is likely to be of more real service than the girl who is just sufficiently well-to do not to make her own blouses.

Clare had always been the ugly duckling of her society-loving family until the wool fever set in. She was the only one who could cut out a wearable garment or turn a heel, consequently when home-sewing parties were convened, she was a power among her sisters' fashionable friends, who suddenly discovered that on some occasions the ability

to pick up dropped stitches and manœuvre microscopic lengths of material into self-respecting underwear, was more precious than skill at bunny-hugging or ragtime.

Even in the cult of the khaki there is a risk of overdoing it, and there are still some girls who regard a soldier as a kind of superior parasol or handbag to be flaunted before the jealous gaze of an admiring public. To walk the streets on a khaki-clad arm is still the chief ambition of many empty-headed maidens, not because the owner is a hero in embryo, but from motives of self-glorification. Khaki is the fashion, and she parades it as she would a slit skirt or a Tipperary hat.

The girl who affects a conspicuously military costume usually does so from a desire to attract notice to herself, and is not necessarily imbued with the spirit of patriotism. There is no virtue in apeing warlike fashions, for, unlike the soldier's uniform, which is the badge of courage and loyalty, they only mark the wearer as one whose patriotism is directed into quite the wrong channels.

There are girls who seem to consider soldiers a sort of windfall from heaven, sent expressly for their pleasure and amusement. These are the damsels who throw aside any shred of self-respect they ever possessed directly khaki looms in sight, and who seem to collect soldiers in the same way that they once did picture postcards.

Taken on the whole, however, the cult of the khaki is a glorious one, for all are working for a common cause. The typist curtails her lunch hours, and forsakes chocolates that she may manufacture woollen comforts; the society girl gives up her luxurious life, her sports, and theatre-going that she may minister to those who need help and sympathy. The barrier of snobbishness between rich and poor has been to a great extent broken down, for castle and cottage have yielded up their men-folk, and a common anxiety makes us wondrous kind.

One thing the war has done—it has stemmed the tide of frivolity and pleasure-seeking, which threatened to engulf the present-day damsel. Having discovered that there is something more in life than bargain sales and cinemas, she has at last awakened to a sense of her own responsibilities. Never again will she be satisfied to flutter on the fringe of life, for she has tasted the joys of service, and found her own niche in the world.

Even in the cult of the khaki there is a risk of overdoing it, and the girl who affects a conspicuously military costume usually does so in order to attract attention.

Naturalised!

"There was War in the Gates."

By Muriel C. Lindsay.

War!

Dreamt of, discussed, pooh-poohed by pro-Germans as an utter impossibility, discredited as a Tory nightmare, it had descended with incredible swiftness on a peace-loving nation with a result undreamt of by the launchers of the thunderbolt.

Hannah Wraith flung down the paper she was reading and turned again to her work, an army shirt, with a heavy sigh. How dreadful it all was, she thought; how would it end, and when? It was hard to be a woman these times; there was so little one could do to help. She longed to be of some real help to her country, but young and ignorant, what could she do?

The sudden sound as of a field of corncrakes in full blast made her drop her sewing and run to the garden wall. About ten minutes away from the row of semi-detached houses where she lived with her father, was the temporary aerodome of a private company working night and day completing monoplanes for the government, and latterly every evening the graceful, flying things circled round and round, being tested, or dashed off scouting to the coast, north and south, for possible glimpses of the enemy.

Though by this time custom had slightly staled their first novelty, Hannah was always thrilled by the sight of their amazing agility, and longed to be in one. She watched until the last aeroplane came down out of the clear sunset sky, then went in to join her father at their evening meal. After a quiet pipe over the evening papers he retired to his room, leaving Hannah to her work and perplexing thoughts.

The night came down, still and windless. Faint laughter from amorous couples wandering about the wide open spaces in front of the houses reached her, and she smiled sympathetically, for was she not engaged to the finest and handsomest fellow in the world? It was a pity, of course, his being a German by birth, but he had been a naturalised Englishman for years, and naturally our way was his.

A business engagement prevented his watching the flying with her to-night, but each evening, as a rule, he was an eager and interested spectator, enthusiastically applauding, and eager to obtain all information available concerning the aerodrome and its contents.

"I am thinking of learning to fly," he once said in answer to her inquiries concerning his insatiable thirst for knowledge. "Already I know a considerable amount about the engines, and believe I could soon obtain a pilot's certificate if I wished. Then I would offer my services to the Government. They will gladly welcome anyone so highly qualified," he added complacently.

She was thinking of this when a rifle-shot quickly followed by another rang out, the sudden unexpected alarm making her jump and prick her finger. Rushing into the garden she looked and listened. There was nothing to be seen, but voices calling and a faint hubbub could be heard. Presently it died away and she re-entered the house.

"I wonder what happened," she mused aloud as she took up her work again. "Sounds as if some inquisitive person had been nosing round and failed to answer the sentries' challenge."

She was not long left in uncertainty. Shortly there came a tap at the door, and a rosy face with dancing black eyes belonging to the Wraiths' "general," just returned from her evening out, peeped round and a breathless voice said:

"Please miss, I've come in."

"Very well, Jane," returned Hannah tranquilly. "The master's in so you may lock up and go to bed."

"Yes, miss; and, oh! please, miss, there's been a spy shot at the arydrum," continued Jane, advancing a trifle more of her plump person into the room in her excitement. "Trying to let off a bomb he was. The sentry halted him three times an' he never took no notice, so he ups an' fires, and the man he fires back. . . ."

"And did they get him?" asked her mistress, as Jane paused to breathe.

"No, miss," was the injured answer, "he got away in the dark among them dratted trees."

"Was the sentry badly wounded?"

"Nothing to speak of, miss. The bullet only grazed his cheek." Jane's tone distinctly implied the sentry had no right to such an escape. "A little deeper an' the pore feller 'ud have been killed, they said."

"Lucky for him he wasn't," replied Miss Wraith, mentally wishing she had been on the spot to render first-aid if need be. "Good-night, Jane, and don't dream you're being shot by spies."

With Jane's noisy departure to bed the house became very peaceful. Hannah worked on, her slender white fingers basting and hemming, the lamplight falling on her russet head and the curves of her charming face and figure.

Suddenly a stealthy noise outside made her sit up very erect and listen intently with beating heart and straining ears. There was no doubt about it, someone was climbing the wall at the foot of the garden; she could distinguish the scrape of his boots on the bricks as the intruder drew himself up, and the muttered curse as he dropped to the ground.

Rousing herself from her temporary paralysis she sprang to the window to shut it, but even as she pulled it towards her it was roughly snatched from her hands, and Eugen Rothfelz, her *fiancé*, stumbled across the threshold, closing it behind him.

"Good gracious, Eugen! What on earth is the matter?" she exclaimed.

He laughed uncertainly as he sank into the nearest chair.

"Oh, I—I was passing and seeing your light thought I'd just give you a surprise," he replied with a would-be jaunty air. "Aren't you pleased to see me?"

"Yes, it is certainly a surprise," she answered truthfully, her amazement growing as she surveyed him more closely. He was hatless and breathed hard as if he had been running; his hair and *Kaiserlich* moustache were roughened and limp, his hands grimed and scratched.

"Of course, I'm pleased to see you," she added, "but it is very late. I was just going off to bed."

"Not too late for a few minutes' chat and smoke, eh? Mind if I light up? Got any matches handy?"

Silently she passed them to him, watching him with eyes in which doubt and suspicion were gradually replacing astonishment. Why, if he wanted to see her so urgently, had he not come openly to the front of the house instead of sneaking over the wall like a . . .

"I didn't expect you to-night," she said at last. "You said you were going out of town. And, anyhow, what made you come in in that silly fashion? I hope to goodness no one saw you. A nice character they'd give me if . . . What is it?" she queried anxiously, as in trying to light his cigarette he winced and a groan broke from him.

"Oh, nothing much." He tried to laugh unconcernedly, and failed. "Only my arm. As I came past the aerodrome the cursed sentry got an attack of nerves, and let drive at me. It caught me just here," gingerly touching his left upper arm.

"The sentry shot at you?" she echoed aghast. "But why should he? Didn't you answer him? And why were you coming that way? Surely it was——"

She paused and caught at the back of a chair to steady herself, the vague suspicions in her mind crystallising into horrible certainty. *She knew!*

"You—*you* are the spy," she said hoarsely. "*You* tried to wreck the aerodrome. What does it mean? I don't understand."

"You are singularly dense, my dear, if you don't," he answered coolly, blowing a cloud of smoke down his nose. "One must do something to serve one's country, and, since I am no use as a soldier, I must do what I can in other ways."

"Your country?" she cried amazed. "But you are a naturalised Englishman, and England is your country now, not Germany."

He gave a contemptuous flick of his fingers.

"*Nichts*," he said scornfully. "Never you believe that. And *that* for your naturalisation. What is it to us? Nothing but a makeshift, a convenience. No true German ever forgets his Fatherland, and though he may call himself a British subject, when his country needs him he is ready."

"And this probably is not the only thing you have done or tried to do. I suppose you managed to add to your laurels by spying?"

she inquired, with a delicate sarcastic inflection in her voice.

He nodded.

"Oh! yes, I think I have contributed quite a considerable amount of information concerning the North-East Coast to the proper quarter. That knowledge will prove very useful for the safe landing of our troops when they come," he added with insolent triumph.

After his callously brazen confession there was silence between them for some time. Hannah sank into a chair with a feeling that the bottom had dropped out of life and in its place was a horrible disgust, a sense of moral contamination that sapped her very being. And as she gazed at him she saw him for the first time as he really was.

Stripped of the imaginary virtues with which her fancy had clothed him she beheld a typical offshoot of Germany.

And to think she had loved him, had trusted and believed in him, returned his kisses, preferred him to one of her own countrymen, and all the while he was betraying his salt!

"You might see to my arm," he complained peevishly. "It hurts like blazes."

Silently she helped him off with his coat and turned back the blood-stained sleeve to examine the wound. It was a nasty-looking one though, fortunately, not serious; the bullet had gone clean through the upper arm, just missing the brachial artery. It had bled a good deal and was stiff and sore.

Deftly she cleansed it, and after applying an antiseptic dressing bandaged it with meticulous care, a bitter smile curving her lips as she reflected that the first real wound to which she brought her newly-acquired knowledge was not that of a war-scarred soldier but a traitor lover.

When it was finished and his coat on again, she pressed him back into his chair.

"You'd like a drink after that before you go," she suggested, gathering her materials together. "Wait quietly here and I'll bring you one."

With the cool, unhurried swiftness that characterised her movements, she left the room and entered the darkened dining-room. As the electric light flashed out she saw with relief that the tantalus was open. While she poured out the spirit odd little fragments of sentences buzzed ceaselessly through her head.

"... She brought forth butter in a lordly dish. ... At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell. ..."

"They knew how to do things in those days," she reflected. "No half-hearted measures then. Up to now I've always thought Jael the last word for cold-blooded meanness and treachery, but I find I'm mistaken. There are lower limits still, and I begin to sympathise with her."

Replacing the brandy, she moved to where a soda siphon gleamed, but while in the act of filling the glass paused, for from its pedestal in a corner beside her a telephone receiver caught the light and, as it seemed, winked suggestively to her.

For a moment she looked at it unheeding; then her hand began to shake and her heart to pound as she responded to its silent, subtle message. She filled the glass hastily, placed it on a tray, and turned away. No, she couldn't do it. It was impossible, a low-down trick, not playing the game. After all he hadn't succeeded.

But outside the room she paused irresolutely, biting her lips nervously. Supposing—supposing there was another attempt, and this time successful. A vision of the shattered aerodrome filled with wrecked machinery and dead men surged into her mind, and she shuddered. There must be no second attempt, at least, not by Rothfelz. Why should she hesitate? A little while ago she was lamenting there was nothing tangible a woman could do for her country, and now, when chance had thrust the opportunity to be of use into her hands, she shied from it like an unbroken mare.

Her eyes hardened and grew purposeful, her lips tightened resolutely. Setting down the tray she drew off her engagement ring and laid it beside the glass, then re-entered the room. A few minutes later she emerged with a white face and shining eyes, softly unlocked the front door, and taking up the tray rejoined Rothfelz.

"You've been a long time getting that drink," he grumbled as she entered.

"The tantalus was locked," she lied calmly, "so I had to go upstairs and hunt for the key. I hope this is as you like it—'butter in a lordly dish'" she thought with bitter cynicism, as she laid the tray and its contents on a table beside him.

"Looks all right," he assented graciously. "I seem to want——"

He broke off, staring incredulously at the discarded ring before him.

"Why—what is this?" he stammered. "You have not—Hannah!"

"You'll understand that in the circumstances an engagement between us is

Men in the tiny hall barred his way, and he fell back into the room, despair on his livid face. . . . . With a snarl he pulled out his revolver and fired at her.

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impossible," she answered quietly, a hint of sadness, of regret for a fallen idol, in her voice.

He looked from her to the glittering circle with almost ludicrous dismay.

"See here, Hannah," he began blusteringly, "you don't mean to say you'll let a trifle like this come between us? It's ridiculous. I never meant——"

"It depends on what you call 'trifles,'" she replied. "Your nation and mine have very widely divergent views on the subject."

"Well, then, I suppose I'd better leave you now," he said sulkily, gulping down his drink and making an effort to move. "You will understand I have no wish to compromise you by my presence here since we are no longer betrothed."

"Oh, there's no necessity to hurry away," she said composedly. "You'd better wait a little longer and give that arm of yours a rest."

While she spoke she moved to the window, opened it and looked out into the night; then placing the electric lamp between it and herself she pulled up her chair and resumed her sewing.

"Why do you want the window open?" he asked suspiciously, "and why have you placed the lamp there?" For some reason or other, why he could not have said, her cool aloofness irritated and made him nervous.

"The room is very warm and I like plenty of fresh air," she answered, "and I need the lamp for my work."

She continued sewing while he watched her with brooding eyes. Now he had lost her she had never seemed so desirable to him, with her white skin, warm colouring, and, best of all, the comfortable fortune that would be hers eventually.

What a fool he had been to come here in the state he was and give himself away to her! He should have gone straight home and she would never have known anything about it. If it hadn't been that his wounded arm was making him feel sick and faint, and that he was afraid of collapsing and being asked awkward questions if found near the aerodrome, he would have gone straight on and hoped for better luck next time.

Though conscious of his gaze Hannah sewed on, outwardly composed, but in reality with every faculty on the alert. Once she stopped and looked intently at the seam she was felling, apparently merely considering its neatness, but really listening intently to every faint noise outside, while "at her feet he bowed, he fell" rang through her head like a dirge.

Then the sound for which she was waiting, the sound of men scrambling cautiously over the wall, reached her, and she rose, opening the window wider so that the light streamed out into the garden. Turning, she stood in the entrance, looking fixedly at her quondam lover, and something in the strange intentness of her gaze made him sit forward uneasily.

"What is it?" he demanded. "Why are you standing there? You look as if you expected someone."

"I do," she answered promptly in a voice that shook in spite of her efforts at self-control. "You wanted to know why I was so long getting you that brandy, and I told you the tantalus was locked. I lied. It was open. The reason for the delay was my telephoning to the aerodrome telling them that the man who made the attempt on it this evening was here, and to come and take him without delay. Now you know the reason for the lamp and the open window. They are outside waiting for my signal."

Raising a hand she beckoned, and stood aside against the wall, her limbs shaking, but her eyes blazing triumphantly in her white face.

With a bound he was on his feet.

"Confound you, you ——" Hoarse with rage, almost inarticulate, he spat at her an unprintable word, and sprang to the door. But there, too, men in the tiny hall barred his way, and he fell back into the room, despair on his livid face.

"I expected you'd do that, so I told them to come back and front," said Hannah, with a triumphant laugh that was not good to hear.

The sound of her mocking voice broke the bounds of his anger. With a snarl he pulled out his revolver and fired at her.

There was a breath of hot air, a searing pain in her cheek, and the bullet buried itself in the woodwork behind her. The next instant he was seized and overpowered, and presently was being escorted back to the aerodrome pending his reception by the police.

But when Mr. Wraith, wakened out of his first sleep, and a frightened maid came down to see what had happened, they found no rejoicing exultant Vengeance, but an overwrought girl with a bleeding cheek, weeping over the ruins of her happiness.

The Child in the Attic

Curled in my big arm-chair all day,
I watch the fleecy cloudlets play;
I see the sun on the old church steeple,
I see the tree-tops, but no people:
For I am high above the world
When in my attic-chair I'm curled.

Curled in my little bed all night,
I watch the big moon shining bright;
I see the elves and goblins creeping,
I see the stars' bright eyes a-peeping
For I live in a fairy world
When in my little bed I'm curled.

Gwen Nisbet

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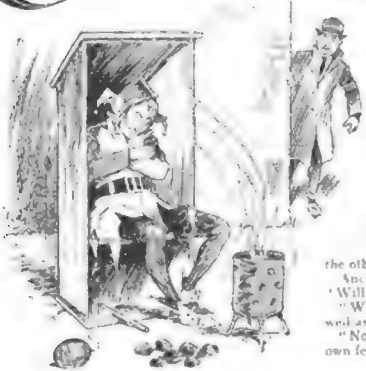


INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION.

An Irish drill sergeant was instructing some recruits in the mysteries of marching movements, and found great difficulty in getting a countryman of his to halt when the command was given.

After explaining and illustrating several times, he approached the recruit, sized him up silently for a couple of minutes, then demanded his name.

"Fitzgerald, sor," was the reply.

"Did you ever drive a donkey, Fitz?"

"Yes, sor."

"What did you say when you wished him to stop?"

"Whoa!"

The sergeant turned away and immediately put his squad in motion. After they had advanced a dozen yards or so he bawled out at the top of his lungs: "Squad, halt! Whoa! Fitzgerald!"

• •

AN IMPOSSIBLE REASON.

HE: "The Smiths only invited me down to their place because I play a good game of golf."

SHE (consolingly): "Oh, I'm sure you must be mistaken."

QUITE UNEXPECTED!

Florence, who was an ardent admirer of her own vocal qualities, had been selected to sing a solo at the church concert.

The following morning at the breakfast table she remarked to her younger brother:

"Well, I never thought my voice would fill that large hall."

"Neither did I," answered her brother unfeelingly; "I thought it would empty it."

• • • • •

THE ONLY REMEDY.

A passenger gave up his seat in a tramcar the other evening to a lady. Owing to the swaying motion, his foothold was not at all secure, and he was treading on the toes of the other occupants of the car.

Another gentleman, attempting to rise, said "Will you take my seat?"

"Why? Are you getting out? I can stand as well as you."

"No," was the reply, "but I'd rather stand on my own feet, if you have no objection."

• • • • •

MOURNFUL!

It is a mournful thing, I know,
When one's heart is more'n full of woe!
Elsie Skeet.

• • • • •

HE DREW A BLANK.

Robbie met a neighbour who was smoking some fine fragrant tobacco sent by his son in America. He took out his own pipe ostentatiously.

"Hae you a match, Sandy?" he queried.

The match was forthcoming, but nothing more.

"I do believe," said Robbie slyly, "I hae left ma tobacco at hame."

"Then," said Sandy after a silence, "ye might gie me ma match back again."

• •

AN EXCELLENT CATCH.

"Oh, Mr. Wadleigh," said Tommy, "won't you come out in the yard and play ball with us boys?"

"I'm afraid not, Tommy; you see, I never had a ball in my hands. You'd only make fun of me."

"Oh! you're joking, Mr. Wadleigh. I heard mamma telling Mollie you were the best catch in the town."

I pon a fiery, wooden steed
Young Cuthbert sits astride.
While patient Mollie pleads in vain
For "just one little ride."

A HUNDRED TO ONE.

At a local court in the West of Ireland a farmer was brought up before a magistrate for stealing his landlord's fowls.

"I can bring two witnesses who saw him steal my fowls," said the landlord.

"Well, my man, what have you to say for yourself?" said the magistrate to Pat.

"Faith, yer honour, Oi can bring a hundred who didn't see me steal them."

"I dismiss the case," replied the judge.

* * * * *

SHARED BY THE SHRIMP.

"Move on, there!" cried the driver of the smart carriage to the loiterer in the narrow street. "Move on, there!"

"Move on yourself," cried the loiterer, whose burly form prevented all vehicular progress. "I'll move on when I'm ready!"

An authoritative gentleman in a top hat popped his head out of the carriage window.

"Do you know who I am, sir?" shrieked the top-hatted one. "I have M.P. at the end of my name!"

"Righto!" retorted the loiterer. "That's nothin'. Every bloomin' shrimp 'as that!"

THE MISSING HAIR.

Bulkins was very pious and very fond of the ladies. One evening he was calling on a girl, and was boring her with sanctimonious remarks.

"Ah, Miss Mary," he said, "we are watched over very carefully! Even the hairs of our head are numbered."

"Yes, Mr. Bulkins," she replied, "but some of the back numbers of yours seem to be missing."

* * * * *

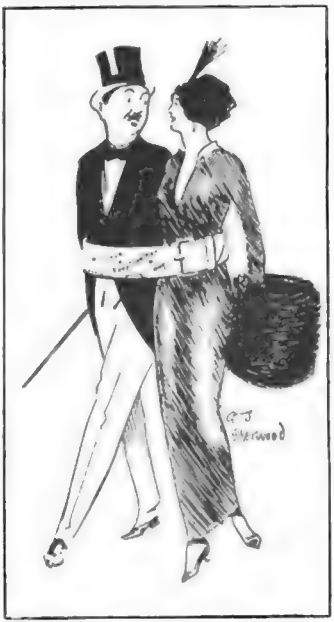
A LONG, LONG WAY.

He was a college professor, greatly beloved because of his kind heart, but with the common scholastic failing of being very absent-minded. He visited his married niece, and listened to her praise of her first-born. When she paused for breath, the professor felt that he must say something.

"Can the little fellow walk?" he asked, with every appearance of interest.

"Walk!" cried the mother, indignantly. "Why, he's been walking now for five months."

"Dear me!" exclaimed the professor, again relapsing into abstraction. "What a long way he must have gone."



THE "KEEPTOGETHER" BELT
Insures uninterrupted conversation in crowded streets.

ROSIE'S LILY.

"For the Sunlight was Scented with Lilies.
And the Scent of the Lilies was Love."

By F. E. Baily.

One day an earthquake [illegible] to her three aunts, her godmothers a[illegible]

CHAPTER I.

Rosie was a little golden-haired child of some eleven summers, with blue eyes and the sweetest face you ever saw.

Rosie was a little golden-haired child of some eleven summers.

But one day an earthquake swallowed up her kind parents, her three aunts, her godmothers [illegible] and [illegible] she [illegible] with the cousin of her uncle, a harsh woman of uncertain [illegible]

Alas! Cousin Sarah looked on all children as little pests, and so it came about that she beat Rosie.

First she was content with slapping her for an hour or two, so that Rosie could not help crying. Next she took to beating her with a cruel whip, and finally she did both. Either she would start with one and finish with the other, or begin with the other and finish with the one.

It all depended.

One morning, at half-past eleven, Cousin Sarah, who had been slapping Rosie since before breakfast, and I must tell you that breakfast was at 7.30, put aside her hand and took up the cruel whip. At a quarter to one, when the punishment was over, Rosie, sad and aching, wandered out into the cheerless garden to feed a tame worm—

Rosie, sad and aching, wandered out into the cheerless garden to feed a tame worm.

the only creature in the whole wide world that loved the poor child.

Suddenly she heard a voice saying:

"Little girl, why are you so sad?"

She looked over the low hedge into the back lane, and saw a little boy dressed in blue velvet with a lace collar, sitting in a goat-carriage drawn by four goats.

"Because Cousin Sarah beats me. But why do you sit in a carriage and not run about like other children?" asked Rosie.

He gave into her hands a beautiful lily on a pot, tasked his goats, and was gone.

"Alas!" said the little boy, with patient grief, "I was run over by a steam-roller as a baby owing to a careless nurse. That is why I cannot walk."

"Do they not beat you?" asked Rosie.

"Nay," said the little boy whose name I must tell you was Claude; "my kind father gives me all I wish. Here, take this, Rosie; it shall

"Come indoors, idle girl!" she cried. "The carrier has brought me a new whip with knots in it."

comfort you when you are sad."

He gave into her hands a beautiful lily in a pot, lashed his goats, and was gone.

Rosie marvelled at the lovely blossom till she heard Cousin Sarah's harsh voice.

"Come indoors, idle girl!" she cried. "The carrier has brought me a new whip with knots in it. I will cure your lazy ways!"

And Cousin Sarah beat Rosie till tea-time.

CHAPTER II.

Twenty years have passed away. Cousin Sarah has passed away, too, leaving all her wealth to Rosie, and the slender, beautiful girl lives alone in a cottage by the sea. She still cherishes the lily given her by the little boy in blue whom she has never seen again.

One night a great storm arises. The brave fishermen put forth to rescue the gallant bark, but can save only one—a handsome young man with a blonde beard. They bear him to Rosie's cot. His

Sighing happily, she falls into his arms.

opening eyes fall on the lily, and he gives a great cry:—

"I have found you at last! I was the little boy in blue. A clever old gipsy cured me with simples. I have travelled over the world seeking you, but finding nothing except seven gold mines. Are you at liberty? Does Cousin Sarah still beat you?"

A soft blush mantles Rosie's face.

"I am free, dear Claude, and will gladly marry you. Cousin Sarah is dead and has not beaten me since."

And, sighing happily, she falls into his arms.

The brave fishermen put forth to rescue the gallant bark.

HYMN TO GRUB.

Sing not, I pray, the Savoy or the Cecil,
  Places where only the plutocrat stops,
Or dainty theatrical demoiselles wrestle
  With poems in steaks and sonatas in chops.
Take me away from the Popular Palaces
  Run by philanthropists who can employ
Hourls to wait on you—Daphnes and Alices—
  Give me the buns that I bought when a boy!

Foreigners fancy their frivolous fodder,
  Cocks' combs and anchovies sealed up in tins;
They're quaint in themselves and their food is still odder—
  The guest ends as hungry as when he begins.
Grant us the grub that is gummy and gluttinous,
  Bulging with currants whose charms cannot cloy,
Calming the greedy and ravening brute in us—
  Give me the buns that I bought when a boy!

François.

NOT A FIXTURE.

Mr. Grant, though he has been married for several years, has not yet lost his admiration for a pretty girl.

Having to remove from his present abode, he was looking for a suitable house, and discovered one to let in a quiet street.

He rang the bell, and a very pretty girl came to the door, looking quite charming in her black dress and mob cap.

"Is this house to let?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Yes, sir."

[illegible] with it [illegible] with a smile.

"No, sir," the maid answered [illegible] reply.

TAKING THE CAKE.

A new Territorial, who had not quite learnt his business, was on sentry duty one night when a friend brought a cake from the canteen. As he sat on the grass eating cake, the major sauntered up in undress uniform. The sentry, not recognising him, did not salute, and the major stopped and said, "What's that you have there?"

"Cake," said the sentry good-naturedly. "Have a bite?"

The major frowned. "Do you know who I am?" he asked.

"No," said the sentry, "unless you're the major's groom."

The major shook his head. "Guess again," he growled.

"The barber from the village?"

"No."

"Maybe"—here the sentry laughed—"maybe you're the major himself?"

"That's right. I am the major," was the stern reply.

The sentry scrambled to his feet. "Good gracious!" he exclaimed. "Hold the cake, will you, while I salute?"

• • • •

THEN THE CRASH CAME!

"Well," said the lawyer, "how did the accident happen?"

"You see," his rustic client explained, "it was dark, and I seen them two lights ahead in the road, and, thinks I, them's two motor-cars. I'll drive between them."

"And did you?"

"Yes; but, you see, they was both on the same motor-car!"

• • •

PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE!

OLD LADY: "My little man, I wouldn't do that."
SMALL BOY: "Wouldn't! Garn, yer couldn't."

HIS BIRTHPLACE.

PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER (perusing reference): "Have you any knowledge of the silk and satin department?"

APPLICANT: "Spent all my life among 'em, sir."

PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER "And sheets and blankets?"

APPLICANT (forcibly): "Born among 'em, sir!"

• • •

MOSTLY HALL!

A self-made man bought one of those fine old Georgian places down in Sussex, principally on account of the glowing description of the estate agent and on information from friends.

When he went down to see his mansion he was much impressed by the great pillars, the spacious porch, and particularly the great hall running from the front to the back of the house.

He inspected the place and came back to London.

"What shall you name it?" he was asked.

"I think," he replied, "I shall call it Mostly Hall."

JUST LIKE HIM!

An elderly gentleman went into a photographic studio and asked to see the proofs of a picture recently taken of a young man whose name he gave. They were handed to him as a matter of course and he examined them critically. He seemed pleased, and finally said:

"These are of my son. This one is a remarkably good photo of him—it is very like him indeed. Has he paid you for it yet?"

"No, sir," said the photographer, "not yet."

"Ah!" said the elderly gentleman, "very like him indeed."

POSITIVELY HIS LAST APPEARANCE.

SNAKE CHARMER: "That's the last time I shall play that tune."

The CIRCUS STAR

By Jessie Pope.

Come and see us at the Circus,
Where the lion snaps his jaws,
For your presence will not irk us,
And we long for your applause.
You'll linger by the crocodile
And elephants, of course,
But you'll love the little girl upon the horse!
Song.

It is always very pleasant to come into your kingdom—though it takes the gilt off the gingerbread if there's no one with whom to share it. As a rule, however, when a young man possesses good looks, good manners, and more money than he knows what to do with, he has plenty of friends into the bargain, and perhaps it was Garry Sheldrake's own fault that he was lacking in this respect.

Garry had knocked about the world on his own since he had left school, and the life had suited him, but all his friends were over seas, and the Uncle Ambrose, who had recently left him his carefully-invested capital and a nice place in the north of England, was his only relative.

Of course, the brown-faced, broad-shouldered young man was pleased at the thought of his new possessions, but after the necessary visits to his lawyers in London, he still stayed on at his hotel, going the round of the town. People looked twice at him, and wondered who he was, but, though interested in the gay throng, Garry was too shy and reserved to make any effort to join it. He was not a man to pick up acquaintances at every turn, and rather preferred to play the part of spectator.

Still, it was lonely work, and after a while, the sights of London began to pall, while the thought of the fine old house and the horses and the shooting waiting for him up north grew more and more attractive. So one night he told the hotel people he would be leaving the next morning, and turned out after dinner for a last leisurely look at London.

He had thought of dropping into a theatre, to pass the three hours till bedtime, for Garry still retained the healthy habit of feeling sleepy by eleven, but, to tell the truth, he had seen all the plays, while the revues were a little too breathlessly topical for his semi-colonial mind to follow.

Presently, however, he paused before a festoon of shaded electric lights, which outlined the portico of "Hippolyte's World-Renowned Circus." Remembering not only that he was always fond of this form of entertainment, but also that he had heard this was a good show, Garry asked for a seat near the ring, and was smilingly provided by the box-office lady with a half-guinea stall.

There is always a dingy atmosphere about the interior of a circus, however world-renowned, and the naked arc lights in the lofty roof shone mercilessly on the brown mat-covered ring with its low red-cushioned barrier. The hard, pitiless glare made the rows and rows of spectators look strangely white-faced, and though the less expensive seats were well filled, the brown-faced young man in evening dress had the stalls practically to himself, with nothing to block his view of the three elephants who were being put through their leisurely paces by a stout, golden-haired lady in a serpentine costume of glittering green sequins.

Garry liked elephants, and had hunted them not once but many times, but the trio

in the ring left him cold. The scarlet trapezists who followed were certainly more interesting, and the antics of the French clowns, who came next, made him laugh now and then. But on the whole he came to the bored conclusion that circuses were not what they used to be, and thought seriously of taking his departure, when a glance at the programme decided him to wait for the next turn. It was described as an equestrian act —"La Petite Etoile, and her wonderful horse, Zantippe."

Garry loved horses; in fact, it was the thought of his uncle's well-filled stables, now his own, that had decided him to move northward. The gate in the low barrier round the ring swung open to admit a red-coated groom, leading Zantippe, a fine black horse of the usual circus type, and Garry was leisurely surveying his points before he noticed that La Petite Etoile had skipped lightly into the ring. Then for the first time that evening a sudden look of interest came into his keen grey eyes.

She was a slender little slip of a thing, dressed in a silken vest and tunic of palest yellow; her dark hair, unrestrained except by a narrow gold fillet with a single star in front, hung loosely down her back. Her figure was as slim and lithe as a boy's, her face was pale, but her lips were half parted in a smile, and there was a look of childish expectancy in her wide, dark eyes.

The band struck up a monotonous tune, the ring-master cracked his whip, Zantippe broke into the orthodox lope, and with a small, shrill cry, La Petite Etoile ran across the ring, and leapt lightly up on his broad, satiny back.

It was not that her performance was particularly marvellous or daring or even original—it was the childish charm of her pale piquant face, the unstudied grace of her slim swaying body, from the tip of her yellow satin toes to the loose hair flying out in a dark cloud behind, as she drifted round and round the ring, that seemed to touch something warm and soft in Garry's heart.

Those grey eyes of his, so clear and pale against his bronzed skin, never missed a movement, but when others applauded he sat quiet and watchful, his pulses, for some inexplicable reason best known to himself, beating a little faster than was their wont.

The final evolution had arrived. With a change in the music the rider slipped down from the horse, and ran to a small spring-board in the centre of the ring, while the red-coated groom held up a hoop midway. The band played faster, the ring-master's whip cracked louder, and just as the ambling Zantippe approached the point where Garry sat, La Petite Etoile ran up the spring-board, and with her shrill little cry leapt through the hoop to the horse's back.

A sudden sound swept through the great building as if hundreds of people were drawing their breath with a gasp of fear, for whether the glittering little figure miscalculated her spring as she leapt through the hoop, or whether Zantippe made a false step, it was quite impossible to decide. In any case, La Petite Etoile failed to retain her balance on the horse's back, and with arms outstretched and hair flying, continued her dive across the barrier right to where Garry was sitting.

Then the gasp of horror changed to exclamations of relief and approval as the solitary figure in the stalls rose deliberately and caught her in his arms with incredible neatness, then swung her back in the ring with one and the same movement. There was a thunder of applause, for the thing was done with such ease that the audience believed it was all part of the show—an impression confirmed by the little circus rider who, smiling and unruffled, skipped to the centre of the ring to bow her acknowledgment of her patrons' vociferous appreciation.

An unexpected thrill is always a safe draw. The people clapped and stamped and shouted, and La Petite Etoile blew kisses right and left on alternate tip-toes. In fact, the spectators did not consider they had sufficiently recorded their gratitude to the painstaking management for their superb thrill, until they had rapturously recalled her three times.

Meanwhile, Garry had sunk back again in his seat almost unnoticed, with no hint in his calm, not to say indolent exterior, to reveal the fact that every nerve in his body was tingling with the memory of the moment he held that little clinging creature in his arms —the memory of the clutch of her hands round his neck, the touch of her cheek for a moment against his.

It was an extraordinary bit of luck that he had happened to be sitting just there, that he had not only saved her from a serious accident but increased her reputation as a trick rider, and his resolute mouth relaxed into the suspicion of a smile as his eyes mechanically watched the sleek performing seals which flopped about the ring in the next turn, and provided a healthy anti-climax to the last.

But the show had once more lost its

interest for Garry, and while the audience were laughing over the seals' football match he strolled out, to work off his feeling of restlessness in the night air.

Before he had reached the entrance, however, a stout bejewelled Frenchman in evening dress bore down upon him with outstretched hands and a beaming face.

"Ah—my *dear* sir," he cried, "it is that you thought me long in offering my thousand thanks! But I awaited you here, or the good people would guess that *Monsieur's* marvellous act was not part of the performance."

Garry smiled and shook the impulsively extended hand.

"Glad I was able to be any use," he said.

"Ah, *mon ami*, you have the admiration and gratitude of my heart! Your courage, your cleverness—it was magnificent! La Petite Etoile, poor little one, would have herself killed but for the young Engleesh gentleman with the strong arms. And it was all done as if so arranged. Ah, *Monsieur*, it bring down the roof!"

"Very fortunate I happened to be there," replied Garry. "That made it quite simple. A Rugger tackle—that's all."

M. Hippolyte appeared mystified.

"Ah!" he said, "since it gave *Monsieur* no trouble, if he would repeat it every night it would fill the house and double my takings. *Monsieur* is rich I doubt not—but the cheque I could offer might be of use, perhaps, one day. But," he added, sighing, "*Monsieur* wants no money—that is plain."

Garry smiled.

"I don't," he said, "and if I did I shouldn't take it on. That sort of thing might not come off twice alike, you know. Too much of a risk for the lady. But she is none the worse, I hope."

"The worse!" exclaimed the proprietor, "no, the better! Never has she taken three calls. She left her thanks for *Monsieur*, and she has gone. You cannot keep these *demoiselles* when their turn is over; admirers, little suppers—that is what they live for, eh, *Monsieur?* But she was well pleased—the effect was like magic. It was too good to lose. One of my people he shall learn to catch her. But, alas! it will not be the same. The young Engleeshman in the stalls—that is what opened the heart of the people. If only he would consent!"

He paused wistfully and looked at Garry with a pleading expression in his twinkling black eyes. But Garry laughed and shook his head.

"No, thanks," he said, "and if you'll take my advice you'll let well alone," and good-humouredly declining all offers of free passes, light refreshment, or even a cigar, he strolled out into the street.

Garry's thoughts were naturally enough still lingering over the incident of the evening, although the proprietor's words had given them a new direction. He now pictured the little circus rider with her admirers, supping hilariously in some crudely gorgeous restaurant—her witty sallies in broken English sending the *jeunesse dorée* into roars of delighted laughter.

She was probably French, or possibly Spanish, but not quite the type—a cross-breed, perhaps; a very dainty and delectable little creature, gay, devil-may-care, full of the joy of life while youth and charm and little suppers lasted and while there were admirers to pay for them.

A motor-bus had pulled up alongside at the signal of a dowdily dressed young woman waiting on the curb. She was evidently one of London's work-a-day girls, clerk, or typist, to judge from her neat but shabby appearance, the old-fashioned jacket and skirt, the trim but well-worn hat, the imitation leather dispatch-case in her hand. But as she turned to mount the step the light shone full upon her, and with a sudden start of astonishment Garry recognised the pale childish face of La Petite Etoile.

He was not a quick thinker at any time, and it took him some seconds to reconcile the vision of a brilliant butterfly at her "little supper," her dark eyes sparkling with gaiety and champagne, with this shabby, solitary, little person boarding a prosaic motor-'bus on its way to the suburbs. The sight of her pale weary face and drooping little figure moved him strangely and struck an even deeper chord than the one which that momentary embrace had set vibrating.

The poor child had nearly had a nasty accident, the shock might have upset her in spite of her pluck at the time, and Garry suddenly resolved it was no more than his duty to finish his job by seeing her safely home, without letting her know he was doing it, and having come to this conclusion he sprinted after the 'bus, caught it, and took a seat on the top just behind her.

His interest was now strongly roused, his curiosity was piqued, and while the 'bus rattled and clattered northward, he found himself continually wondering why the successful circus rider should so completely veil her identity in the disguise of a London workgirl.

La Petite Etoile failed to retain her balance on the horse's back, and with arms outstretched and hair flying, continued her dive across the barrier right to where Garry was sitting. . . . The solitary figure in the stalls rose deliberately, and caught her in his arms.

[Page 455, col. 1.]

They had left the wider thoroughfares behind and were travelling along a suburban tram route, when the 'bus stopped and Garry became aware of the fact that the girl in front was leaning over the side and waving to someone on the pavement, and as they started again an elderly man with a refined, delicate face, mounted the 'bus, and sat down by her side. From his position immediately behind, Garry could hear what they said, and the nationality of La Petite Etoile was settled as soon as she said, in a soft voice, which betrayed a slight Irish accent:

"Oh, daddy, you shouldn't have come to meet me. You'll make your cough bad again."

"I couldn't wait any longer," he replied querulously. "These late nights wear me out. If I realised that taking up this typewriting meant coming home with the milk every morning, I'd never have given my consent."

"But, darling, it isn't half-past ten yet. I've really been as quick as I could," protested the soft voice—"and when the work comes in, you know, it *must* be done."

"Why can't you leave it till the morning?"

"The morning won't do for my work," came the reply in a lower tone. "I have to do it just when it's wanted."

"Very well then, I shall come round and complain to the office. It's scandalous that my daughter should be about London this time of night."

"Do you want to lose me my job, daddy?"

"You could find another."

"Not one that paid so well—and you know we can't live without money."

"It's hardly kind of you to taunt me on my dependence," said the man's voice plaintively.

"Oh, I'm not, daddy. If you can't work and I can, it's only fair that I should."

"It's true I can't work in this benighted country, but once in America I should soon be on my own feet again. I've heard from your sister again to-day, imploring me to go out to her, and I'm more than inclined to, even if it's a case of going steerage."

"Do you want to go very much, dear?" Her voice faltered.

"You know I do. It would put new life in me to be with my dear child and share her comfortable home. How she loves me! You must read her letter. It is pathetic to see how much she wants her poor old father."

"But I want you, too," said the girl, "and Amy has got her husband and children, and I've no one but you."

"You've got your typewriting," he replied indifferently.

There was a pause; then she said:

"Very well, daddy, we must save up for your passage—of course, you can't go steerage, but we shall get enough for a second-class fare before long."

"Before *how* long? Amy is keen on my coming by the *Britannic* on Monday week. If I do that her husband will meet me in New York."

"I'm afraid it's impossible, daddy. I should have to make twice as much as I do for you to go as soon as that."

"Very well, my child," he said bitterly. "If I can't go, I can't. I am used to disappointments and rebuffs by this time."

Neither spoke again, and a little way further on they got down. Averting his face as they passed, Garry saw them disappear up a side turning.

"Selfish old brute," he soliloquised, adding in a different tone: "Poor little soul!" and returning to his hotel, he announced his intention of staying a little longer in London.

The next morning M. Hippolyte was surprised and delighted by a visit from "the young Engleeshman," and expressed his feelings with characteristic enthusiasm.

"Do you really intend," said Garry, breaking in, "to have last night's incident repeated?"

"But yes, *Monsieur!* Such a fine effect—it *must* be done. But all shall be safe—you can trust me. I am a business man."

"Very well," said Garry. "I will accept your proposal, and do it myself."

M. Hippolyte turned up his eyes ecstatically to heaven.

"Ah! that is the best I could hope," he said. "*Monsieur* has had a reverse of fortune? He will accept the cheque for his services? My season has yet ten days to run. What does *Monsieur* ask?"

"I don't want anything—I've got plenty," replied Garry, "but I will only undertake the job on one condition—that as you double the lady's risk you also double her salary."

The proprietor accepted the condition with a readiness that showed that La Petite Etoile was not drawing such big money as some of his artistes. In any case, as he reiterated, it was worth it; the noble young Englishman lolling in his half-guinea fauteuil would give a genuine touch to the thrill which one of his own people could not convey.

"But I'm not going to risk anything. We must have some rehearsals," said Garry, and as a matter of fact, during the rehearsals which followed, he proved himself fastidious to a fault in the matter of caution, arranging the course of the run and the jump by marks in the ring, sufficiently disguised from the audience, but which by constant practice reduced the trick to automatic security.

So, night after night, the finale of the equestrian act brought its thunder of applause, and the crowded house got its gasp and thrill as the brown-faced young gentleman in evening-dress caught La Petite Etoile in his arms and swung her back safely across the barrier. And the brown-faced young man got his thrill, too, in that moment of tingling ecstasy when the little yellow figure was clutched to him, her dark hair brushing his face—a moment only, but enough to live for all day.

And the circus girl—did she get her thrill also? Who shall say? She made no sign, she spoke no word, and yet there seemed a new sparkle in her dark eyes, though, of course, that may have been a natural satisfaction in the knowledge that pay and popularity were both doubled.

Behind the scenes, where Garry never came, rumour put him down as a "toff down on his luck and glad to get the turn." Nobody denied however that he did his job remarkably well, but that was Garry's way. When he set his mind to a thing he carried it through, even though it meant a frequent ride on the top of a motor-'bus, a means of transit that did not appeal to him at other times.

The last night of the run arrived. There was an atmosphere of excitement in the crowded house and an air of hilarity in the ring. Even the elephants turned and twisted less lugubriously than usual, and a jocund note rang in the bark of the shiny seals as they leapt for their well-earned pieces of fish.

As was customary at the end of a successful season, the gratified management had run to the expense of providing bouquets for the principal artistes. But La Petite Etoile looked a little paler and a little sadder than usual, though there was nothing lacking in her dexterity and grace when her turn came.

The last leap through the loop to Zantippe's back and from Zantippe's back to the arms of the young gentleman in the stalls was manœuvred with an abandon that won its usual gasp and roar of appreciation, and when the smiling ring-master presented the little airy creature with a bouquet of crimson roses, the applause broke out with renewed enthusiasm.

She took the flowers with a pretty gesture of delight, pressed them to her lips as the other ladies had done, and then, tripping across the ring, she pulled out a single bloom and, with a flush on her cheeks and a little smile just curving her red lips, held it out to Garry.

How the crowd cheered as, with an answering flush and an answering smile, the young man in the stalls fastened the rose in his buttonhole, but no one was near enough to see the swift look that passed between the grey eyes and the brown.

Twenty minutes before the boat-train for Liverpool left Euston the following day, an elderly man, spruce and smart, with an air of pleasurable anticipation in his well-featured face, took his place in a corner seat, while his shabby, slender, dark-eyed daughter hurried about the platform making final arrangements for his comfort.

"Here are the papers, daddy," she said, taking up her stand outside the carriage-door; "the luggage is in, and your cigarettes are in your side pocket, remember. I do hope you'll be comfortable."

"Yes, yes, my child. I shall be all right. I'll send you a postcard as soon as I land, and a letter when I get to my journey's end. A new life in a new country, and my dear daughter waiting for me at the other end—that will cheer me more than anything."

"Your hot-water bottle is in the small leather case," said the girl wistfully; "the steward must fill it every night. You've got plenty of money for tips, haven't you, dear? Will you have your rug over your knees now—you must never catch a cold to start with!"

"No, no, I'm quite warm. This new great coat is like a blanket; I knew it would be too thick. Good heavens! I hope they're not going to bring that child in here!" he added anxiously, sighing with relief next moment, as a family party moved further up the platform. "You've got the papers? That's right. I don't think there's anything else I want. You must let me know how you get on, my dear. Don't get into any mischief, and never forget you are a Malone of Carybridge."

The girl nodded, but did not speak.

"If you lose your work, or anything goes wrong," he said after a pause, "we shall have to see if we can't manage to have you

over with us, too. But I hope you'll let me have cheerful news. I shan't want to be worrying about you."

"You shall have heaps of cheerful letters, never fear, daddy. And give my love to Amy and tell her to look after you."

"Ah, she'll do that, *dear* Amy! Well, good-bye, my child, be a good girl, and if I should have left anything behind, you must send it on."

There was a whistling and waving of flags as the girl clung to him in a quick passionate embrace, and then stood waving her hand with a brave smile on her face as the train glided away. Even after it had disappeared round the bend she still stood a few moments, and then walked back along the platform, half-blinded by a sudden rush of desolate tears.

A figure stood in her path—the tall figure of a young man with a brown face and clear, honest grey eyes, and a red rose in his buttonhole.

"You!" she gasped, and then threw a quick apprehensive glance behind her. "Oh! it doesn't matter now," she added, half to herself.

"I wanted to thank you for the flower," said Garry simply.

"But how did you know me?" gasped La Petite Etoile, a scarlet flame of colour dyeing her pale cheeks.

"I recognised you the first night," he said, "when I came back on the same 'bus, and I heard you and your father talking."

Her eyes met his in a half-frightened, comprehensive glance.

"And that was why——" she began.

"Yes," he said, "I agreed to do my part in your turn on condition your salary was doubled so that you could pay your father's passage to America."

They walked in silence down the platform.

"You have been more than good," declared the girl suddenly. "I can never thank you." And her eyes met his.

"It has been my greatest pleasure to serve you," he said gravely. "But now that's all over what are you going to do?"

"Oh, I'm *really* going to do typewriting this time," she said with a smile. "I joined the circus because it meant more money, but now I've only myself to keep."

"Have you any friends?" he asked.

"No; father and I were alone in the world. We're poor but proud, and I think he'd have died of shame if he'd found out what I was doing. I had to deceive him, and I'm so thankful he never knew."

Her companion's face grew hard, but he made no comment, and merely asked:

"Have you any work in prospect?"

"N—no, not exactly. At least, I'm going to look for some to-morrow."

"Won't you marry me instead?" asked Garry gently. "I know you don't know anything about me, but will you trust me, and give me the right to take care of you and make you happy?"

The girl trembled, and the tears suddenly brimmed over in her dark eyes as she lifted them to his.

"I do trust you," she said. "I have trusted you all through, you've been such a gentleman. But, oh! how can you want to marry a poor little thing like me?"

"I love you," he said, and his voice faltered. "And if you will only give me the chance I believe I could make you love me, too."

"But I think I've done that all along," whispered La Petite Etoile.

They were in the spacious courtyard of the station by this time, and all he could do was to find her hand with his, and hold it tight.

"Then I needn't tear up the licence I have in my pocket?" he said.

She looked bravely into his eyes, and shook her head.

Garry breathed a sigh of relief.

"That's good," he said. "By the way, I've got a place in Yorkshire and some horses for you to ride, and I thought we could go down there to-morrow afternoon. The question is, would it suit you to marry me in the morning?"

"Yes," said the Circus Star, "if it will suit you."

And as a matter of fact it suited them both admirably.

DO YOU WANT TO WIN A MONEY PRIZE?
If so, turn to page 467
and enter for our
Great Picture Puzzle Competition.

The Winter Girl

She's packed away her summer frocks,
Her muslins and her laces,
The cobweb hose with silken clocks
And little open spaces.

The bathing dress of blue or red
In which she played the mermaid
Is laid aside, and now, instead,
She poses as a fur maid.

The holly and the mistletoe
Have berries donned to greet her—
Beneath the last, with gas turned low,
If lucky, you may meet her.

The Summer girl has passed away—
We mourn for her in reason
But not too deeply, for, to-day,
The Winter girl's in season.

Ada Leonora Harris.

His Guardian Angel

"Tell me, pretty maiden,
Are there any more at home like you?"

By Radcliffe Martin.

The flapper was bending over her sister's dressing-table. It is regrettable to say that she was annexing her sister's best silk stockings. Then Providence intervened. Her sister burst into the bedroom and a flood of tears simultaneously.

"Oh, Joyce, so glad you've come!" cried the flapper, a trifle untruthfully, as she replaced the stockings. "What is the matter, you old dear?"

The flapper stroked her sister's hair in sympathetic fashion.

"It's father again!" sobbed Joyce. "He's gone and brought down a man named Tomkins to stay a week—a fat man with red hair. And he's just given me a broad hint that this Tomkins is very rich, and would be a very desirable son-in-law."

"He might think of me sometimes," said the indignant flapper. "Here I'm seventeen, and he's always bothering about marrying you off. Well, you needn't be Mrs. Tomkins unless you want to. They can't drag you to the altar."

"But it's Arthur. He's got to join his regiment in camp in two days. And he's so jealous, because he knows he hasn't any money. When he hears that this Tomkins is staying for a week after he's gone, he'll be just furious. Perhaps he won't even write to me from the camp."

"Just you run off with Arthur and get married. We've never had an elopement in the family yet. I should just love to break the news to Dad. When he's properly roused he can swear so beautifully."

"My dear Margaret, you can't take a husband just as you take a cab. Arthur hasn't money enough to marry. You know father wouldn't even hear of the idea of our being engaged."

"Look here, I was going to ask you if you'd lend me your rose-coloured stockings. Just you give them me, and I'll look after this Tomkins man."

"Oh, will you, dear?"

"He shan't stay. I'll see to that. Where is he now? In the smoke-room? I'll go and give him the semi-glad-eye and make him welcome. I'll just take these three pairs. Arthur is so much in love that he'll never notice your stockings, and when he's at the front being taught to form fours you'll have to wear very sober things."

The flapper strolled casually into the smoke-room, making a considerable display of rose-coloured silk stocking.

"This is my youngest daughter, Margaret, Tomkins," said Mr. Gladwin.

"Delighted to meet you," said Mr. Tomkins.

Margaret smiled sweetly on the young

She seated herself on a low stool almost at his feet and listened with obvious admiration to his disquisitions on the war.

man, making a mental note: "Tubby and carroty." She seated herself on a low stool almost at his feet and listened with obvious admiration to his disquisitions on the war. When Mr. Tomkins had settled the war and fixed the precise date for its conclusion, he discoursed on the glories of his Rolls-Royce.

"It must be splendid to own a car like that," observed Margaret. "Ours is such an old rattle-trap."

"Very pleased to run you round in it any time you like, my dear," said Mr. Tomkins amiably.

Had Mr. Tomkins known how nearly a footstool was thrown at his head when he uttered that patronising "my dear," he would instantly have withdrawn his kindly

offer. But Margaret restrained herself till it was time for dinner. Then she bolted from the room and met her sister.

"Oh, he's the arch-beast!" she cried. "He's called me 'my dear' and 'little girl' already. If the pater wasn't so particular about the laws of hospitality, I'd entice the Tomkins creature to the lawn and turn the hose-pipe on him. Now, Joyce, directly dinner is over, you slip out of the room and meet Arthur at the lodge-gate, as usual."

"How do you know I meet him there?"

"Watched you often from behind the hedge," smiled the flapper. "Heaves, then rot you two talk! If anyone called me an angel——"

"I'm sure no one ever would."

"Don't interrupt! I'll nab Tomkins after dinner. He won't get away from me."

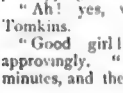
"Oh, it's ripping of you! It's my last night but one with Arthur, and he would never forgive me if I didn't come."

Directly dinner was over, Joyce glided through the French windows on to the lawn. Mr. Tomkins' eyes followed her.

"Oh, Mr. Tomkins," cried Margaret, "do come out on the lawn! The stars are just ripping to-night."

"Ah! yes, with pleasure," said Mr. Tomkins.

"Good girl!" thought Mr. Gladwin approvingly. "I'll call her in after a few minutes, and then he can have a little chat with Joyce. He seemed struck with Joyce."



"Aren't they just wonderful?" said the flapper, surveying the heavenly host.

"Er—yes, very fine," agreed Mr. Tomkins, surveying the lawn for a glimpse of the elder sister.

The flapper took Mr. Tomkins' arm in the friendliest fashion.

"You're going to stay here a week, aren't you?"

"I hope so. Your father was good enough to invite me for that period."

"That will be glorious. The worst of having nice people down here is that they never stay long. There was a Mr. Pritchard—such a rich man. He'd made a lot of money out of a gold mine in Borneo or Afghanistan, or one of those weird places they bother you about at examinations. He came for a week, but he only stayed two days."

"I don't think I shall disappoint you," said Mr. Tomkins.

"Oh, I know you won't. You won't be like Mr. Macrae. He'd a rubber mine or something. He simply rolled in money. He'd promised to take me fishing, and after two days he just hooked it. Not at all sporting, I call it."

"Ah, did he? Er—I suppose your sister is out here somewhere?"

"She's just gone down to the gardener's wife at the lodge, who's in the heights of rheumatic fever. Awfully good sort is Joyce to the afflicted."

"So I should judge."

"Let me see, what was I talking about? Oh, nice people who didn't stay. Why, there was Mr. Jobson. He'd invented some new kind of electric light, and you know what money there is in that, with the bulbs going bang every other day. He'd a diamond scarf-pin like one of his own electric lights. Of course, he hooked it in two days. Do you know what I think?"

"Not the remotest idea, my dear."

"I think there must be some kind of pressence round this dear old house that the family can't see. Only on view to visitors, you know."

"Oh! they'd be called away on business. You can't imagine the many claims on the time of an active business man like myself."

"Why did they leave their luggage here, then? I asked father, and he told me to say nothing about it to anyone on any account. Of course, I feel that you are an old friend, so I don't mind telling you. I can't help thinking that there's some deep mystery about this house of ours."

"Not a bit superstitious myself. That sort of thing is quite out of date. You may be quite sure I'll stay my week, if you want to have me."

"Oh, we love to have you! I should be awfully sorry if you went. Aren't you dreadfully rich?"

Mr. Tomkins laughed a little pompously. "I'm not a Rothschild, my dear, but most people would say I was pretty well to-do."

"I do like rich men," said the flapper simply.

"Margaret, dear," came a voice from the window. "I don't think that you are wrapped up warmly enough. Come in."

"Yes, father," said the dutiful flapper.

"I think I'll just smoke a cigar and escort your sister back from the lodge," remarked Mr. Tomkins.

The flapper entered the dining-room.

"It *was* cold, dad. I'd have come in

before, only I didn't want to be impolite to Mr. Tomkins."

Then she passed out of the room, left the house by the side entrance, and fled past the kitchen garden to the lodge.

"Beware the prowling Tomkins," she whispered. "Hook it, Joyce, round this way. I'm just going to the lodge to tell Mrs Jones that she's very ill with rheumatism. You've been to see her, and missed him on the way back."

"You're a dear," said the young man.

"Why don't you marry the girl?" asked the flapper cheerfully. "I'm kept bothering about your love affairs. Never have time for any of my own. Now call her your moonlight angel, and let her go. Tomkins will be down here in half-a-minute. Anyhow, he won't stay after to-morrow. I'll see to that, so don't you turn green with jealousy when you're forming fours to save the Empire on Epsom Racecourse. Quick, Joyce, get that good-night over. I'm looking at the Great Bear."

When Mr. Tomkins returned to the house he said that he had enjoyed his stroll in the grounds immensely.

"Sorry I missed you," he remarked to Joyce. "I walked as far as the lodge."

The flapper was a little doubtful about her sister's fibbing capacities.

"Joyce had been to see about Mrs. Jones' rheumatism," she explained to her father.

"Quite right, quite right," said Mr. Gladwin solemnly. "Always inquire when any of the people are ill. An attention like that costs nothing and creates a friendly feeling between employer and employed. I can imagine nothing more likely to sweep back the rising tide of Socialism. What do you say, Tomkins?"

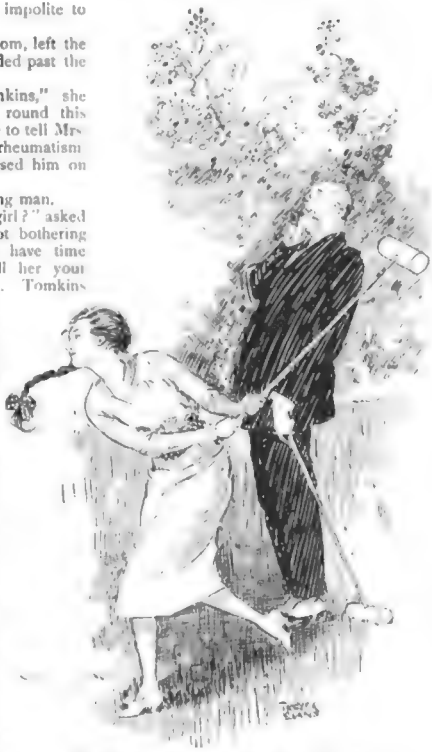
"I am sure that the attention of Miss Gladwin would win anyone's heart," replied Mr. Tomkins with a smirk.

Mr. Gladwin gazed approvingly at his elder daughter, and thus missed the hideous grimace which the flapper made at the unconscious Tomkins.

The next afternoon Mr. Tomkins, who had declined to play tennis as far too active an exercise, was enticed by the flapper to play croquet with herself and her sister. All went well. The flapper was lost in admiration of Mr. Tomkins' play. She wondered that he could play so well, and was frankly incredulous when he assured her that he had never handled a mallet before.

"You must have done, Mr. Tomkins, else where did you get your style of play? You are deceiving me, and for that I'm going to croquet you right off the ground."

With a mighty swipe she drove her own



With a mighty swipe she drove her own ball and Mr. Tomkins' right into the thicket of rhododendrons.

ball and Mr. Tomkins' right into the thicket of rhododendrons.

"Oh dear, what luck! I've strained my ankle. Would you mind getting my ball as well as your own, Mr. Tomkins?"

"Always delighted to wait on a lady," said the gallant Tomkins.

He vanished into the bushes, and the flapper flung herself full length on the ground.

"Does it hurt, dear?" said Joyce sympathetically.

"Does it toffee?" exclaimed the flapper. "I wanted to get rid of that squirming beast."

"Hush! he'll be back in a minute."

"Bet you a bob he won't."

They waited and waited, but no Mr. Tomkins came. They began another game, and played for nearly an hour. Then Mr. Gladwin came out on the lawn fairly bristling with indignation.

"A most discourteous and outrageous thing!" he began. "John tells me that Mr. Tomkins has packed his bags, put them in the car, and driven away without a word to anybody. I hope you girls——"

"Why, father," said Joyce, "he was playing croquet with us. He went to get a ball out of the bushes, and never came back. I thought it was a little rude."

"A little rude, indeed! Packing up and going without a word of apology or explanation to his host. I tell you that young man will never set foot in this house again."

"Perhaps there was a death in his family," suggested the flapper.

"If all his relations had died suddenly there is no excuse for his not at least leaving a message. But he's had no telegrams or letters since lunch. His conduct is simply gross rudeness."

"Perhaps his conscience has troubled him, and he's decided to go to the front and die for his country," advanced the flapper.

"Most unlikely. He's not the fighting sort. But if it had, surely the Empire could have spared Mr. Tomkins for the two minutes necessary to say a word of farewell to his host. I am surprised, Margaret, that you should suggest such preposterous excuses. You should imitate Joyce, who appears to appreciate the depth of the insult to the family. Now, mind, neither of you are ever to recognise this man if you should chance to meet him."

"We won't, father," returned Joyce.

That evening, as two lovers stood by the lodge gate, an agile figure swung itself on to the top bar and said:

"Bless you, my children! The hideous rival has gone. Half-time, Arthur. You've no right to kiss all the family. Kiss father, if you are not content with Joyce."

"And she won't tell me, Arthur, how she got rid of him. Isn't it too bad?" said Joyce.

"I needed an audience," explained the flapper. "It's awful rot talking to only one, and just a sister at that. Well, I told him the strange stories of Mr. Pritchard, Mr. Jobson, and Mr. Macrae, who came to stay here for a week, and vanished after two days."

"But, Margaret, there never were any such persons," protested Joyce.

"I do hate your beastly accuracy," complained the flapper. "Then I asked him why they left their luggage behind, and why father was so angry if anyone asked questions about them. That part is quite true. The pater always is angry if anyone asks questions about anything."

"But none of it was true, Margaret."

"It sounded awfully true. So, when he went in between the rhododendron bushes and saw the grave——"

"What grave?"

"The grave the gardener's boy dug this morning. It's a beauty. I took two bob out of your purse to pay him. Well, as I say, when he saw the grave, being a careful young man, he rushed for his car, and left the accursed house. He didn't want to be buried with Pritchard, Jobson, and Macrae."

"But how could you do such a thing? And father a churchwarden, too! What would he say if he knew? Suppose this man tells the police. What will he think of us all?"

"I wish he would tell the police. That fat old inspector at the station knows me. He'd just burst his belt with laughter. I know what he'll think of us. This is the house of death. You are the bait, Joyce, which draws wealthy young men into the grip of the wicked churchwarden."

"And what are you, you flapping iniquity?" asked Arthur.

"If he says his prayers to-night," replied the flapper, "and he ought to after his narrow escape, I think he will put up a special petition for his guardian angel."

ONLY THREE MORE SETS! ENTER NOW, OR YOU MAY BE TOO LATE!

£1,000 IN CASH

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GREAT PICTURE PUZZLE CONTEST.

FIRST PRIZE: £500.

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HOW TO ENTER THE CONTEST TO-DAY.

The first ninety-six pictures appeared in the "Royal Magazine" for July, August, September, October, November, December, January, and February. Copies may be obtained through any newsagent for 1½d. each (December Number 6d.), or the eight numbers will be sent post free for 3s. 4d. from the Publisher, "Royal Magazine," 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

ON the following page you will find a set of twelve pictures representing the names of railway stations which have been selected by the Editor, and further sets of pictures will appear monthly in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE. These prizes are offered to the readers who discover the names of the railway stations represented under the conditions below

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Competitors are required to write clearly in ink beneath each picture the name of the station they believe it represents, fill in their names and addresses in the space provided, cut out the page, and keep it until further instructions appear in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE. The last set of Picture Puzzles will appear in the June Number of THE ROYAL, published on May 22nd, 1915, making 144 pictures in all.

EXAMPLE:

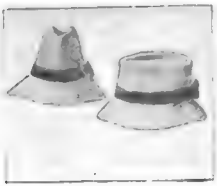
DART-MOUTH.

KEEP YOUR LISTS UNTIL THE DATE FOR SENDING IN IS ANNOUNCED.

READ THESE CONDITIONS CAREFULLY.

1. Write the name of each station clearly in ink. One name only is allowed under each picture.
2. No alterations may be made in the names. If you have made a mistake, cross out the word and write it afresh. When you have filled up your list cut it out and keep it till we tell you what to do with it.
3. Competitors may send in as many complete series of pictures as they please, but each complete series will be judged independently. Sets must be fastened together in the top left-hand corner.
4. The prize of £500 will be paid to the competitor from whom the Editor receives a complete series of pictures with all the names correct of the actual stations as represented. If no competitor sends in a correct list the prize of £500 will go to the sender of the most nearly correct list. In the event of two the prizes will be divided.
5. The Editor of the ROYAL will not be responsible for the loss or non-delivery of any attempt, and proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of receipt or delivery.
6. No member of the staff of the ROYAL MAGAZINE may enter for this competition.
7. Only the names of railway stations found on Pearson's List of Railway Stations will be admitted. This list is obtainable for 3d. through any newsagent or book-stall, or it will be sent post free for three penny stamps by The Publisher, Room 84, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
8. Competitors must agree to abide by these conditions, and the Editor's decision is in every respect final.

TENTH SET OF PICTURE PUZZLES (Nos. 97—108).



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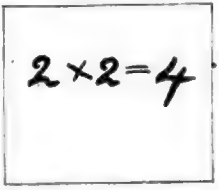

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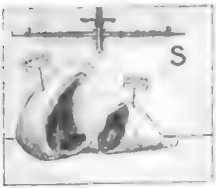

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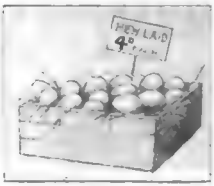

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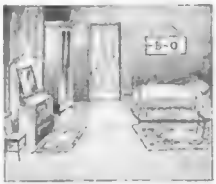

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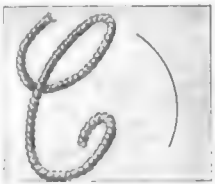

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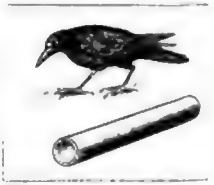

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PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

FORCIBLE FEEDING.

APPARENTLY it is not only Suffragettes who have to submit to forcible feeding, for it has been practised with great success on some young hedgehogs, though in their case it was because they could not, rather than would not, eat.

These hedgehogs had been deserted by their mother, and as they had no idea of lapping, were on the point of starvation when the possibilities of a fountain-pen filler occurred to their owner. The little creatures' jaws were first opened; then the fountain-pen filler was inserted, and their mouths filled with milk until they were obliged to swallow.

To obviate any danger from the sharp point of the glass filler, a piece of cycle tyre valve tubing was fixed on the end, and proved a valuable safeguard.

Of course a good deal of care and patience were needed before the feeding was satisfactorily accomplished, but this was amply repaid by the improvement in the condition of the hedgehogs, who thrived splendidly on the treatment.

In their case a fountain-pen filler proved an excellent substitute for a feeding bottle, and probably saved their lives.

Photo Copyright by F. Thomas.

Forcible feeding has been tried with great success on baby hedgehogs, who were fed with milk from a fountain-pen filler.

Photo American Colony, Jerusalem.

A typical scene in the Holy Land, where the women go meekly afoot while their husbands ride in comfort.

HARD ON THE WOMAN!

THE women in Eastern countries are very far from leading the free, independent life of their Western sisters, for with them man is indeed the dominant sex. In addition to their domestic duties they also toil hard in the fields and perform many tasks which would be considered derogatory to their lords and masters.

In the Holy Land a peasant woman must obey her husband implicitly, and etiquette forbids her to address him in the presence of other men. On the country roads it is nothing unusual to meet a man riding comfortably along on a mule or donkey, while his wife follows meekly on foot.

A TEAM OF TURTLES.

PROBABLY the strangest driving team in the world is that in the possession of Master Rex Bassler, a small boy of six, who lives at Darion, Wisconsin, U.S.A. This youngster rejoices in a team of eight turtles, weighing about thirty pounds each, and from 50 to 75 years old.

These little creatures were, of course, quite untamed, and it needed considerable patience to accustom them to harness. Now they draw their young master in his little waggon with the utmost goodwill, and though not likely to break speed records, they yet form a very serviceable team.

Naturally Master Rex is very proud of his novel steeds, which he drives with great skill and dash.

Photo Agency.

A team of turtles which belong to a small boy in Wisconsin, and have been trained to go in harness.

WASHING-DAY AT THE FRONT.

CLEAN clothes are not always obtainable at the Front, and when the soldiers have to do their own washing it sometimes happens they are hard put to it to find garments wherewith to clothe themselves during the process.

Our "Tommies" are evidently not the only soldiers who will be clean at any cost, for the men here engaged in the laudable duty of washing their clothes are Turcos.

French Turcos wearing feminine garments, some of them obviously feminine—while they wash their own dirty clothes.

Meanwhile, they are clad in a strange assortment of garments, some of them apparently culled from a feminine wardrobe, for the man on the right wears a woman's skirt and a voluminous apron, in addition to a blouse of suspiciously uncertain gender.

A GUN-MOUNTED MOTOR-CYCLE.

MANY new corps have come into formation since the outbreak of war, and not the least valuable among them is a corps of gun-mounted motor-cycles.

These motor-cycles carry two men—a driver and a gunner—and have great advantages in warfare owing to their speed.

One of the most notable recruits to the motor-cycle corps is Corporal Frank Cody, son of the late Colonel Cody, of circus and aviation fame. Probably the love of adventure has been inherited; at any rate, Corporal Cody is likely to get his full share of it.

Daily Mirror.

Gun-mounted motor-cycles are amongst the latest additions to warfare. Here is Corporal Frank Cody driving, while his gunner fires

"Tommies" of a famous British regiment taking advantage of a spell of sunshine and a lull in the fighting, to renovate their trenches.

SUNSHINE IN THE TRENCHES.

EVERYONE knows the cheering effect of a little sunshine after weeks of grey skies and persistent rain, and nowhere is this more appreciated than in the trenches.

"Tommy" is a grateful soul, and a spell of sunshine, however short, is quite enough to bring smiles to his face.

If fine weather and a lull in the fighting come at the same time, our soldiers are only too glad to seize the opportunity to renovate their trenches.

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS' LEAVE.

THE arrangement which has enabled many of our men from the trenches to enjoy a brief leave, and to spend that leave among their relatives at home, is an excellent one.

The scenes at Victoria when the boat train comes in, bringing khaki-clad "Tommies" for their well-earned rest, show how much the respite is appreciated by the men. Some of them sport their new skin coats, which have quite a sumptuous appearance.

Photo Topical Press Agency

Twenty-four hours' leave and a brief visit home is a great [illegible] to our soldiers, — arrive at Victoria in the best of spirits. One of them is wearing his new fur coat.

As a pipe-stopper a clothes-peg is not to be surpassed,—

THE CLOTHES-PEG TO THE RESCUE.

Some Novel Uses to Which it May be Put.

To the modern woman nothing is sacred, and many a young wife has violated the sanctity of her husband's razor by employing it for such illicit purposes as the sharpening of pencils and the cutting of her pet flowers.

No longer need injured man endure such wrongs without retaliating, for if his wife borrows his razor, he can solace his soul by putting her clothes-pegs to base uses. True, clothes-pegs are hardier than razors, and their cost is small, but even so there will be a certain measure of satisfaction in the mere fact of employing them for unlawful purposes.

As a pipe-stopper a clothes-peg is by no means to be despised, for the rounded head fits nicely into the bowl, and is most effective in pressing down the tobacco.

A good many people might object to a clothes-peg book-marker on the score of clumsiness, but it has its points all the same, and is less easily mislaid than a bit of ribbon or a slip of paper.

Smokers should welcome the fact that as a cigar-holder a clothes-peg may come in most handily, the cigar fitting securely between the two forks of the peg.

As a toilet requisite the clothes-peg does not sound promising, but it can be used with good effect as a nail-shaper, and will assist greatly in producing the coveted filbert-shaped nails.

It is quite possible that there are many other commonplace objects which could be used for purposes other than those to which they are usually applied, were people only enterprising enough to discover their possibilities. It is not until we have to make shift that we find how many superfluous things we have considered essentials, and what hidden possibilities lie in such an ordinary object as a common clothes-peg.

Those who doubt their uses should try them, and it will be as well to warn housewives that, the pegs once tested, they may expect fairly frequent raids on their peg-baskets.

—while it serves a practical purpose as a book-in arker,—

—and also makes a most convenient cigar-holder

Photos. Fleet Agency.

NOBBY TAKES TO LETTER-WRITING.

By Edgar Wallace.

For all his fun and drollery Nobby had always an eye to the main chance, and the discovery that letters from the front were worth money at home inspired him to brilliant efforts. But for once in his life Nobby was done—and the manner of his doing is amusingly told in the following story.

"How's them war correspondents going on?" inquired Private Smith. "Are they still 'somewhere in the North of France,' or have they left Boulogne? I'm only askin' because I thought I saw a letter of Nobby Clark's in the paper this mornin' signed 'Sister Agnes.'

"This is a soldiers' war all right. Soldier 'bus-drivers, soldier engine-drivers, soldier mud-larks, an' soldier war correspondents. Before I 'stopped one'* on the Aisne I often used to regret I hadn't any relations to write home to, givin' full particulars of me heroic deeds an' the terrible way I was killin' Germans. It's grand to see the way Tiny White an' Spud Murphy an' other gallant fellers of 'B' Company have been slaughterin' the foe, an' only them that know the true facs realises how much they've got to thank Nobby Clark who, so to speak, was the originator of the idea for the most interestin' feature in the newspapers.

"I don't say that Nobby Clark foresaw the day when the public would be fed up with such items as:

> On the Lyser there was an artillery duel.
> At Alas we have made progress.
> In the Allgonne there is nothin' to report.

"But what Nobby did know was that war correspondents wouldn't be allowed.

"It was when we was in billets on the Marne that Nobby sez one night suddenly:

"'I wonder where Hector is to-night?'

"'Who's Hector?' sez Spud Murphy.

"'Hector,' sez Nobby very deliberate, 'is me young brother.'

"It happened that Sergeant Hasty, the orderly-room sergeant, was billeted with us in the handsome an' commodious barn we was supposed to sleep in.

"Sergeant Hasty is—or was—one of them sharp-faced fellers who do sums in their heads, an' can tell you the date of the Great Fire of London without so much as lookin' at an almanac.

"'Clark,' he sez, 'accordin' to my memory, an' havin' seen all your papers, you haven't got any relations except an uncle.'

"Nobby didn't turn a hair.

"'Hector,' he sez again, 'is me brother, sergeant, an' if I haven't mentioned it, it's because of me family pride. Hector's got two shops of his own. . . .'

"'What sort of shops?' sez Spud.

"'Boot shops,' sez Nobby, 'where you sell boots. Naturally enough, bein' a master man an' highly respected, he don't want the neighbours to know that he has a brother servin' as a common soldier.'

"'That's what I call a snob,' sez the sergeant.

"'That's what other people call him,' sez

* "Stopped one" is the soldier's descriptive synonym for being wounded—*i.e.*, stopping a bullet.

Nobby, 'only I prefer to call him a boot-maker.'

"Never havin' heard of Nobby's brother I was a bit surprised until Nobby told me that he thought of writin' a letter to him givin' full particulars about the retreat from Mons.

"'The only difficulty is that I don't know his address,' sez Nobby, 'but I'm goin' to get over that in a highly novel way. I'm sendin' the letter to the Editor of the *Daily Tribune*.'

"That was a bit hot, because it's a court-martial crime to write to the papers, but Nobby had arranged to get over that.

"'I'm sendin' a letter to the Editor,' he sez, an' showed it to me when I was doin' my bit of trench diggin'.

DEAR SIR,—The following letter composed by me is written for my brother, Hector Clark, Esq. Not knowing his address, will you publish same and pay my brother for same when he calls, as same belongs to him, only I haven't got his address? My brother will say, "Please give me the money for my brother's letters," and you will pay the same over. P.S.—My brother will be dressed as a soldier the same as me.—Yours truly, N. CLARK.

"'There's a good many "sames" in that letter,' I sez, 'an who *is* your brother, Nobby?'

"'Me an' him are the same,' sez Nobby Clark.

"Nobby was very proud of his grand idea, an' talked to a lot of people about it. All the troops agreed it was fine, except Spud Murphy.

"'It looks to me like daylight robbery an' fraud,' he sez.

"'That's a natural way for you to look at things,' sez Nobby, 'but all honest people will call it "stratagem of war," as the poet says.'

"It was soon after this that letters began arrivin' for the troops—the first mail we had had since we had been in the country—an' a reg'lar epidemic of letter-writin' set in.

"You couldn't walk up the village street where we was billeted, without twenty fellers sayin':

"'What's another word for "terrible"? I've used it six times an' it's gettin' monotonous.'

"Sometimes it was 'terrible' an' sometimes it was 'heroic' an' sometimes it was 'undaunted,' but gen'rally it was somethin' about theirselves they was writin'.

"It was about this time when Nobby

"'I'm send.n' a letter to the Editor,' he sez, an' showed it to me when I was doin' my bit of trench diggin'."

Clark an' Spud Murphy fell out over a question of money. It appears that Nobby had bought a pair of boots from Spud an' had borrowed ten shillins on the top of it. Nobby had sworn to pay it back before the regiment left England, an' when he didn't he explained (on the boat comin' across) that his rich uncle had sent him a note sayin' that the money would be forwarded. Naturally, after the letters came, Spud hung round Nobby a lot.

"'It's no good your worryin' me,' sez Nobby. 'Me dear uncle's letter not havin' arrived I can't do anythin' for you.'

"'I don't believe you mean payin' me,' sez Spud.

"'The things you don't believe,' sez Nobby, 'would stock a library.'

"'I suppose you was hopin' I'd "stop one,"' sneers Spud. 'That's the sort of man you are.'

"'Don't you see I'm busy?' sez Nobby sternly. 'What d'ye mean by worryin' me when I'm writin' to me dear brother?'

"But Spud wasn't to be put off. There was a rumour that we was goin' to march into Paris, an' he wanted to buy a few things to send home. He got so persistent that Nobby told him all about the letters he was writin' to the *Daily Tribune*.

"'I'll make lashin's of money,' he sez, 'an' all you've got to do is to be patient.'

"That sort of put Spud in a better temper, an' he said he'd wait.

"Them letters of Nobby was certainly worth money. You've probably seen 'em in print. There was one which began:

> Midnight approaches an' nought can be heard but the sound of a sentry scratchin his head as he peers fiercely into the night with one hand, an' grasps his rifle firmly with the other, singin' a low melody between his clenched teeth as his sleepin' comrades moan in their sleep thinkin' of home.

"Letter followed letter in quick succession. Nobby's description of the takin' of Mons, an' his description of the fight at Landrecies, an' Nobby's grand bit about the takin' of the guns at Compiegne are pretty well famous.

> Dear Hector, how can I describe the events of the past week? Words fail me. I cannot describe them. They are indescribable. I will now tell you what happened.

"'They're mountin' up,' sez Nobby. 'That's four letters I've sent an' I'll bet you they won't pay less than a pound each.

"Nobby described things he'd seen, an' things he'd heard about, but the most popular letters was them that told of things that nobody had ever heard tell of. It was Nobby who described how him an' another feller was carried off by Zeppelins an' rescued in mid air by a French aeroplane. It was Nobby who saved the regiment by blowin' up a bridge an' swimmin' across the river carryin' a German prisoner in his teeth.

"When I was sent home I used to buy the *Daily Tribune* an' read about Nobby's deeds till I was dizzy.

> We have received another vivid letter from Private C—— of the —chester Regt (sez the paper), an' we doubt if any of our readers will be able to peruse the followin' story of a British soldier's gallant an' succe-sful attempt to spike a 16-inch German howitzer without feelin' violently ill.

"I used to get letters from Nobby. He told me that the papers was payin' two pound for each letter, an' that Spud Murphy was worryin' him for money, an' what he was goin' to do to Spud, an' similar gossip.

"Then one day—about a month ago—I got a letter from the Union Jack Club in the Waterloo Road, an' to my surprise it was from Nobby!

"He had come over with an officer of ours who was carryin' dispatches, an' was goin' to be in London for three days. I went up to see him—I'd got my sick furlough, an' could walk about quite nicely with a stick.

"'Smithy,' he sez, 'we'll go round to the *Daily Tribune* office, an' draw my money—at least my brother's money,' he sez, an' then he asked me if I'd seen Spud.

"'Is he home?' I sez.

"'Yes,' sez Nobby, 'rheumatism in the leg,' he sez. 'At least that's what he sez it is.'

"Curiously enough we met a chap of ours in the Strand who'd just seen Spud.

"'Which way did he go?' sez Nobby interested, and the chap pointed to the Charing Cross end of the Strand.

"'He is the one fellow I don't want to meet,' sez Nobby cheerful. 'We'll go the other.'

"'The fact is,' sez Nobby, 'I owe Spud two pound odd—I tossed him double or quits, an' he won, an' on a joyous day like this, with me treasury chest flowin' with milk an' money, it'd be little less than a disaster to meet anybody I owed two pound to.'

"'Why don't you pay him?' I sez.

"Nobby looks at me pityin'ly.

"'Getin' wounded has turned your brain, Smithy,' sez he.

"'So you're Private Clark's other brother, are you?' he sez, an' handed over four pounds. 'There was eight due to you,' he sez, 'but your younger brother called an' collected half.'"

"At the office of the *Daily Tribune* everybody was very decent, an' we was taken up in the lift to one of the editors.

"'So you're Private Clark's other brother, are you?' he sez, an' handed over four pounds. 'There was eight due to you,' he sez, 'but your younger brother called an' collected half.'

"'My younger brother!' sez Nobby faintly.

"'Yes,' sez the editor chap. 'He told me you'd be callin' for the rest in a day or two—here's his receipt.'

"He pulled out a bit of paper.

Received with deep thanks, £4—

"An' it was signed—

SPUD MURPHY CLARK.

* * * * *

"Nobby came out of the newspaper office in a sort of dream, clutchin' the money in his right hook.

"'Smithy,' he sez in a holler voice, 'which way did that chap say Spud Murphy went?'

"So I told him, an' he called a taxi.

"'Drive toward Charin' Cross,' he sez to the driver, 'an' stop at the first ironmonger's you come to—I want to buy an axe.'"

(Another typical Nobby story will appear in the next number.)

CONAHAN.

"I will make you brooches and toys for your delight,
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.
I will make a palace fit for you and me,
Of green days in forest and blue days at sea."

By Larry Evans.

The log fire on the hearth of Father Le Fèvre's cabin had all but burnt to embers. The room was warm, for the chinks were tight, but the wind outside, whining down from the north, pounded the panes with crystals that were fined and frost-tempered and sharp as needle points. And the glass that hung on the door-frame stood a shade under fifty below zero.

"It was a night like this, white and deadly cold." (Father Le Fèvre was staring into the fire again, and talking so softly that I could scarcely catch the words—merely thinking aloud.)

"We were sitting here in the cabin, Conahan and I. Just that day he had come down from the lumber camp twenty miles up river, lean and hard, in his scarlet mackinaw and high moccasins, from months in the timber. We had been talking but little, and were just sitting quiet, glad of the fire, when we heard it that night—heard a cry come down the wind as you heard a moment ago the wind in the tree-tops.

"It brought me to my feet that night—lifted me from my chair in one spring—and I stood staring into Conahan's face with a question in my eyes. He had merely lifted his head, but for all that he was straining his ears to catch a repetition of that sound. A minute, maybe two, we waited, and all we heard was the droning beat of the storm on the windows. Conahan scratched a match, and held it to the bowl of his pipe.

"'Tis the wind, Father,' he said. 'Tis just the wind howlin' its devil's song in the br-ranches.'

"'It sounded like a woman's voice,' I answered him. 'It sounded like a woman calling.'

"Conahan only nodded and leant back. He was thinking of something else. But I was not convinced, and he was still straining to hear. Maybe that was the reason I was the first at the latch-pin, and the first to throw open the door, minutes later, when another sound brought us both up standing.

"Something was scratching at the packed snow in the door-frame; something whined; and when I loosened the door, and the wind blew it open, the thing staggered into the room. It was a dog, *m'sieur*—a dog half dead and more with fatigue, his shaggy yellow coat crusted with sleet and his feet cut and bleeding. A collar hung about his neck, the heavy, padded collar of the sledge harness, and on either side of him the ends of the traces dragged in the snow. But he wasn't the usual sledge dog of the north, not a half-breed wolf, for the sheep-dog blood was plain to be seen in his sharp nose and close-laid ears—*oui*, and in the eyes of him, too.

"He lurched across the threshold when the door flew open, and stood swaying back and forth, his feet outspread to hold him steady, and gazed up at us—gazed and lifted his nose and whined softly. I put my weight against the door to force it shut, and when the latch fell he whirled, that broken, half-dead animal, and tore with his bleeding feet at the door-sill and barked shrilly.

"Conahan dropped to his knees beside him.

"'Shteady, lad, shteady! Time enough yet, lad,' he coaxed. And then to me: 'You'll be afther holdin' the light, Father, and quick-like, man, for I'm thinking this is a matter av minutes!'

"I turned and took the light from the table, and squatted beside him. Conahan had the ends of the flat leather traces in his hands, and for an instant he examined them,

with the dog whimpering madly and trying to lick his face; then he flung them from him and leapt erect.

"'They're fresh cut—the tr-races,' he cried. 'Fr-resh cut and clean cut, too, with a knife that had an edge to the steel av it! Somebody, when they'd no longer the strength to fight fur-rther somewhere out there in the dar-rk, turned the lead dog loose. They must be close, for the fr-resh leather's sthill dry as tinder—and I'm thinkin', Father, the dog will be takin' me to them.'

He whirled toward where his cap and gloves lay steaming before the fire, and the dog, reading all that he meant to do, turned and flung his spent body against the closed door and whimpered madly for haste.

"'Aye, bhoy, I'm comin',' Conahan cried. 'Down, lad! You'll be needin' your str-rength—if 'tis not too late alr-ready. No, Father, 'tis better you wait. Build up the fire and heat a drop av br-randy. I'm thinkin' it'll be but a minute I'll be gone.'

"He went out, the dog leaping before him. I saw him bend to the gale, flounder in the soft snow, heard his voice drift back hoarsely, and then the storm swallowed him up. But he had read well the signs and he did not have far to go. Just yonder across the river where the old trail from the north-west country cuts into the main sled road he found them—he found a sledge already half banked over by the driving wind, and the played-out dog team burrowed in the lee of a drift.

"And he found more than that! Face down in the sugary snow there lay a figure—a figure slim and boyish in its furs and hooded parka—limp and a-sprawl, with the snowshoes that were bound to its moccasined feet at an ugly angle. There was a knife in one outstretched mittened hand—the knife that had cut the lead dog loose. With that same blade Conahan cut away the tangled snowshoes and slit the rest of the broken dog team out of harness.

"I heard him coming back. I had built up the fire when I heard the yapping of the dog, and when I threw open the door Conahan staggered in with that slim figure limp over one shoulder, dragging with the other hand the low, long sledge. Of all the things I remember of that night, I remember most vividly, I think, how he swore hoarsely when the sledge caught in the doorway and hindered his haste. There was a man on that sledge, buried deep in the robes, his head resting on a small canvas-lashed pack at the forward end. As swiftly as I could I shut out the storm, and, dropping to my knees, lifted the corner of the blanket that covered his face. I—I do not know how long I stared: not long, no doubt, but I saw much in that one instant.

"His skin was the colour of ivory—as white and set, nor was there any need to feel for the beat of his heart. He was dead, and he had died horribly, that man had. In his wide, staring eyes and twisted lips there was something that I never want to see again in any face. Why, he had gone across mocking at life itself!

"I drew back the corner of the blanket to hide it, and half rose—rose and turned, and stopped and stared. *M'sieur*, there before my bunk, his back to the fire, Conahan had halted, and he, too, was staring—staring as though he would never see anything else, into the face of that boyish figure that lay in the hollow of his arm.

"The heavy parka hood had fallen back, and down over Conahan's red sleeve there poured a mass of hair, swaying almost to his knees. It was thick—thick and heavy and rippling—and it quivered under the firelight like a thing of life, the colour of raw gold. And—and there stood Conahan, staring into her face, staring as though he would never believe his eyes. I heard his breath come and go, come and go—so, through his teeth. Then he turned and spoke in a voice I had never heard pass his lips before.

"'Mither av God!' he breathed aloud. Men before now have prayed with half the awe there was in his words that night. 'Mither av God!' he said; and then lifted his eyes to mine.

"'Father, look ye!' he whispered. 'Tis a woman—'tis just a bit av a gir-rl!'

"*Oui*, it was she—she who had cried out to us in the storm. Do you wonder, *m'sieur*, that I start up, even now, when I hear the scream of the wind in the trees—and that was years and years back?

"There is no need for me to tell you tonight how Conahan fought that night through to fan back into a blaze the one small spark of life that the wind could not beat out of her body. Isn't it enough to say that somehow he did it, now pouring warm brandy between her bloodless lips, now rubbing with dry snow her ankles, chalky white where he had cut away the frozen leather of the moccasins? Alone, quietly, without a spoken word he drove back the cold that was creeping in upon her heart, and the only sound in this cabin that night was the hiss of his breath as he laboured. She lived, *m'sieur* she lived simply because Conahan kneeling

"The heavy parka hood had fallen back, and down over Conahan's red sleeve there poured a mass of hair, swaying almost to his knees. It was thick—thick and heavy and rippling."
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beside her, shut his teeth and would not let her die! I know, for did I not see with my own eyes?

"Just once, not long before dawn, Conahan looked up at me as I stood holding a fresh bucket of dry snow, and seemed to see me there for the first time. A question flared in his eyes as he jerked his head toward the body that lay quiet behin I him on the sledge. I could only shake my head in answer, and he understood.

"'Then, if ther-re's annything that you can do, Father,' he suggested, 'you'll be carin' a bit for that dog.'

"That girl lived, *m'sieur—oui*, I had said that before. She lived, and, when the wind went down with a rising sun, her eyes opened for the first time and glanced, only half sanely, about the room. But at that instant the dog lying before the fire whimpered and snarled in his sleep; she heard and comprehension flooded her face. She half lifted herself and tried to stretch out her arm.

"'Jock! Good old boy, Jock!' she called, barely above a whisper. But he heard for all that, for he rose and whined, and tottered across to tuck his nose beneath her arm.

"And then, *m'sieur*, that girl did a strange thing. Minute after minute she lay there in the blankets, her white face half-buried in that thick hair of hers, and looked up into Conahan's face; she lay and looked and looked, eyes wide and lips parted, until at last she reached out one small hand and put it almost timidly upon his scarlet sleeve.

"'You are real,' she stated quaveringly. 'You're real—and so we must have made it! I knew I was still sane . . . out there. I knew I saw your light.'

"She tried to smile.

"'I'm hungry,' she told him falteringly—*oui*, as simply as that. 'I'm very—very—hungry,' she told him, and with that she slipped off to sleep.

"I wish you could have seen the face of Conahan, as I saw it there that night."

Father Le Fèvre's voice hushed for a moment; then his head lifted, and he looked into my face for the first time since the beginning of the story.

"*M'sieur*," he asked, "*m'sieur*, have you ever thought that you knew a man—knew him well, I mean—almost as well as you knew yourself, and then waked to the fact that you knew him not at all? It is a strange sensation, *non?* Well, it was in the week that followed the coming of that yellow-haired girl to Singing River that I first realised that Conahan—whom I had known year in and year out, longer than I could remember—was a total stranger to me. Why, I found that I knew him only as he was known to other men the whole river length, for the strength of his shoulders and the weight of his fist.

"Conahan did not go back to the camp up river that week. The first day after the storm I moved what things I needed across to his shack and doubled up with him, so that she need not be disturbed. And the afternoon of that same day we drew the sledge with the quiet form beneath the blanket outside the cabin.

"You would hardly believe that any human being who had been so near the end as that slim girl had been could come back again so quickly. The vitality of the dog she called Jock was no less than her own; and after he had slept the night through and eaten ravenously in the morning, there was little or nothing to show what he had been through, except that he limped a little on his cut pads and whimpered once or twice with pain as he followed Conahan wherever he went.

"She came back with all the vitality of her youthful body, *m'sieur*. Yet not once during that first day did she ask for the man whom Conahan had found with her on the trail below the dam, or speak of the night before or of the storm, save to ask, quietly, that Conahan would care for the dog Jeam. And she lay quiet on the bunk and watched without a word or a quiver of her face while we dragged the sledge outside. But she understood quickly enough when Conahan turned back to her, his cap in hand, and waited for her to speak.

"'He died on the trail, days before you found us,' she told him slowly. 'I—I cannot remember just how long back, but he was dead the second day of the storm.'

"Not a shadow of emotion or a hint of pity coloured her voice or marked her face. Her eyes only narrowed a little—narrowed and hardened—and her lips straightened into a line that made me remember even more vividly the twisted lips of the face beneath the blanket. And then she asked us to leave for her just that small canvas lashed bundle upon which his head had been lying. Conahan put it beside the bunk, and we buried the dead man that same afternoon.

"Conahan spoke scarcely a word while we laid him yonder under the pines, where he has lain quiet since. But he stared a long time into that white face with its broad forehead and twisted, mocking lips. He stared

a long time, not with the horrified fascination that had held me, but with preoccupied gravity that I did not quite understand. I looked no longer than I could help, for it was not nice to see.

"Then he marked the mound and went, without a word, back to my cabin to sit at the side of that girl whose hair lay shimmering like gold, fanwise on her pillow. But that night when Jean Coteau's wife had come to care for her, Conahan crossed to our shack, and, after we had eaten, leapt back to the subject, as was his custom, without preface or introduction.

"'They'd come far,' he said half to himself. 'They'd been close to two weeks, or may-be more on the tr-rail, for there was no food left on the sledge, nor even a scr-rap av meat for the dogs. And they did not know anny too well the counthry, I'm thinkin', for 'tis years and more since anny man has tr-ravelled that tr-rail to come down from the nor-rth-west.'

"He sat ramming tobacco into the bowl of his pipe with a slow forefinger and shook his head at my question.

"'She's slept the whole afthernoon long. She's scar-rce spoken at all. I'm thinkin' she'll never speak—av him, that is! Why, 'twas her father, man, 'twas her own father! Could you not be afther readin' that just fr-rom the face av him? She's that man's daughter—and, Father, she's glad—she's only mighty, mighty glad he's dead!'

"Conahan was silent for an instant. His voice had been oddly gentle; now it became suddenly harsh and grating.

"'Ther-re's manny like him,' he went on, 'too manny like him here in the nor-rth, with the for-rehead av a god and the evil lips av hell itself! Fr-rom where do they come? They're just the men fr-rom "over yonder"; they're the men who can't go back! And 'twas her own father, for she's his str-raight nose and wide-set eyes. Thank God she's not his lips—nor heart, nor br-rain, I'm thinkin'. And she's glad—she'll sleep the sounder now for knowin' that man's dead.'

"*M'sieur*, I would like to picture her for you, if I believed I could do it well. I would like to tell you of her wide, grave, grey eyes and little pointed chin, and her lips that always seemed to smile so readily, but after all, is there any need? It is only how Conahan saw her that counts. And, as that first week passed, I realised, day by day—*oui*, hour by hour—that Conahan would never see the face of any woman in the world save hers.

"I pitied him. Can you quite conceive the conceit of it, of my pitying Conahan, whose brain more than matched my own, and whose body—but I have already told you the man he was! And yet I did just that thing. Each time I remembered the light in his eyes as he stood that first night staring into her smooth face, with her hair heavy as spun gold on his sleeve, each time I remembered the slim wrists and ankles of her I grew more and more sorry for him.

"For a blind man could scarcely have mistaken the thing that was in her features, and the features of that man who lay silent under the snow, for all the evil that masked it. You, and I, too, for want of a better word, call it breeding. And yet I was myself blind. I'd looked on Conahan, year in and year out, too blind to see the man he really was. Now I often wish I could only have known what blood it was that ran in that man's veins!

"Day after day strength came back to that slender girl who lay in my cabin until, except for her frost-touched feet that would be useless still for days, one would never have guessed how near the end she had been. Conahan housed the dog team that week and cared for them, and the rest of the time from sun-up till dusk he spent beside her bunk or doing errands for her.

"Often as I passed or hesitated at the door, I wondered of what they talked, for she never spoke of whence she came or of what she might have been. Yet, hour after hour, I'd hear her light treble or his heavy bass.

"Each day was like that, until one evening at the end of the week I went back to our shack to find Conahan already there before me. He hardly noticed my entrance that night—he barely looked up at all—and I stood and gazed a long time before I realised what he was doing. *M'sieur*, he had her little suit of furred, boy's clothing spread out on the table in front of him and was bent double above it, measuring seam for seam and jotting down the figures with a bit of pencil. Once in a while he would speak aloud to himself. I never saw a face more set or earnest.

"He took the trail that night—the trail to Beckett—and before the following midday he was back again, even his straight back bent a little under the weight of his loaded pack-basket. Everything that that girl might be able to use—every conceivable thing that he could get for her—he had brought for her from Beckett.

"He could have driven, for the sled road was once more, smooth as glass under the hauling. It was like him to want to bring back that pack upon his own shoulders. Yet, for all that, his face was more than dissatisfied when he entered our shack that day. He broke open a bundle and spread a garment out on the table before me, and then I understood. He held up the cloth, between thumb and forefinger, for me to see.

"'The feel av it,' he growled. 'The thickness av it! Father, 'tis about as smooth and soft as sacking!'

"And that big riverman said ungodly things under his breath of the shop and its keeper at Beckett.

"'But it's at least white and clean,' I tried to console him. 'What else matters now?'

"He broke in without waiting for me to finish.

"'And no more than good enough for the wife of Jean Coteau,' he finished.

"'Jean Coteau's wife is a good woman,' I chided him then. 'She's no less righteous for the coarseness of her garments.'

"I could have saved my breath for all the heed he paid. He slipped his shoulders into the pack straps again, but he turned in the doorway, his face clearing a little.

"'But it's your-rself who'll be goin' out to the Mission in the spr-ring. Maybe you'll be afther br-ringin' back with you then, Father—'twill be but little tr-rouble——'

"He broke off suddenly. I could no longer hide it. I could no longer keep it from showing in my eyes.

"'What is it?' he asked. 'Father, what is there wr-rong?'

"How would you have told him? Well, I, too, found it hard to pick words that would not hurt him too much.

"'Spring, Conahan!' I exclaimed. 'In the spring! Why, man, don't you know that long before the frost is out of the trails she'll have gone on out to her own people?'

"He stood and scanned my face—scanned it inch for inch. I have never been quite certain, but he may even have been smiling a little.

"'Her people,' he repeated gravely. 'Out to her own people?'

"I had expected to see the pain flare up in his eyes; I had expected to see his shoulders slacken and droop; instead there he stood, smiling quietly, gently, as though I were no more than a child.

"'Aye, Father,' he finished after a moment. 'Aye, you would be right, no doubt. But I'd given it no thought, myself.'

"He went out. I watched him cross to the cabin to take her the things which he had grumbled were not fine enough for her body. And then I sat and half ate the heart of me out for him. I could almost hear her cry out like nothing so much as a pleased child; I could almost see her lying there looking at him out of eyes that had gone damp and blurred, when she realised what he had tried to do for her.

"I do not know how long it was—far too long, certainly—and then I started up at a hand on my shoulder. It was nightfall. He had sat with her until she slept, and there he stood beside me and looked down into my face for a long moment, before his hand tightened on my shoulder.

"'Father,' he commanded, 'father, you'll be afther stoppin', now. Don't waste your pity, man!'

"*Oui*, he had been reading me—reading as easily as he read the woods or the weather, every thought that had been with me day after day throughout the week.

"'You've been thinkin' only av the littleness av her,' he went on slowly after a moment, 'av her fineness. But, Father, I ask you now, does her fineness make the br-rain av me anny less clear—or my body anny less clean? You're afther rememberin' that I've br-roke ere now with my own hands men who would play me cr-rooked—you know they name me, the whole river length, the man who will have what he will have!—but have you been believin' that that would make me anny less gentle, if 'twas gentle I wanted to be?'

"He wheeled and crossed to the door, and threw it open, the lean, hard bulk of him looming out against the background of the snow through the door-frame. I lifted my head then, and saw Conahan for the first time. The stiff stubble that had been on his face when he came down from the camp up river was gone. His face was as smooth as my own, save for a little brush across the lip. And as he stood and half smiled at me, realisation came like a blow in the face. In his tight, wide lips, and weather-tanned jaw I saw for the first time the unspoilt, still unbeaten youth of him. *M'sieur*, I realised that Conahan was young!

"'You'll sorrow no mo-re for me, thin, Father,' he said, and his voice rang a little. 'I'll have no man pityin' me.'

"He went out and closed the door behind him. And that night, without rest or sleep,

he swung off on the trail that wound north into the big timber up river. Often enough there was a twist in his heavy speech; there was no twist in the soul of Conahan."

Again Father Le Fèvre paused.

"*M'sieur*," he went on at last, "she did not go out to her people in the spring. I learnt long afterwards what Conahan must have known somehow, without asking, from the very first, that there were no people to whom the girl might go. Hardly more than a day or two after Conahan went back up river she was up and about again, and the very first day she was able to walk I did a strange thing. Just why I did it I do not know, but it was I, for all that, who spoke first to the fur agent, and then to her, of the plan that came into my head.

"The agent's wife had been ill for years, and the little nurse he had brought up from the States to care for her had died in the fall. The agent was more than glad to have someone to fill her place. And she—the girl with the thick, shimmering hair—why, I think now that she had not once even dreamt of going out from Singing River!

"She took the little board shack that stood against the agent's house, yonder across the square, and carried across to it that same day all the things that Conahan had brought her from Beckett. It took several trips, even with me to help, and last of all I carried over the little canvas-lashed pack that Conahan had taken from the sledge that first day. In no more than a day or two I had grown accustomed to seeing her slim figure in the suit of vivid blanketing which Conahan had brought her, flashing back and forth from her cabin or Jean Coteau's place, to the door of the agent's house.

"I think she seemed more boyish than ever in that bit of a belted coat and short, thick skirt that reached barely to her moccasin tops. But she never wore anything over her head, and there was nothing boyish about the great golden mass of hair that crowned it and blew about her face.

"In all that time she spoke just once of herself. That was the same night after I had suggested her staying as nurse.

"'My name is Louise Hatfield,' she told me then, after a long moment of silence. I had not asked the question; I had not even been looking at her, but I could not help but wheel and lift my head at the words. Her voice came slowly, almost harshly, and yet scarcely loud enough to be heard. When I turned, her head was thrown back, and her lip was white and deep dented by her teeth. I could not quite understand at that moment the light in her eyes; I could hardly know that it was loathing—bitter loathing for her own name, and so I answered steadily enough:

"'Very well.'

"But a day or two later I saw more clearly; I came to see some things very clearly indeed.

"I had crossed to her little shack just before dusk—I cannot remember the errand. There was a thaw in the air that night; the snow did not squeal under my weight, so she could not hear my approach even though the door of the shack swung half open. There was no light in the single room, save that from the fire on the hearth, and against that blaze she stood, half facing away from me. *M'sieur*, she had opened that canvas-lashed pack at last, and scattered all about the floor were things—things of the sheer fineness of which Conahan had never dreamt.

"She stood there motionless, back toward me, her arms outstretched, and from her hands, even with her face, a gown hung down quite to the floor—a gown of stuff as flimsy as the river mist, scarcely thicker than a man's frosted breath. With the firelight through it it was the colour of burgundy—red as blood. And the flickering light of the blaze quivered and glanced from bits of tinsel that crusted it thick from top to hem—bits of silver shaped like a butterfly's wings. It was a wonderful thing, a totally wonderful thing, and beside her, in a heedless heap, lay two slippers of satin, with heels no thicker-waisted than a man's thumb, and stockings like cobweb. They, too, were redder than the fire.

"All that I saw in one instant, just as you might see the river basin yonder under a lightning flash—just as vividly and as quickly. And while I stared she stooped swiftly and crushed that tinselled gown and the rest into a ball between her hands and jammed it down tight upon the burning logs. Straight and stiff and rigid she stood, while the flame crept over them. I could not see her face, but I heard the sound in her throat as she swayed a little, and then leant hard against the rough stone chimney and buried her face in her arms.

"I turned and went back to my own cabin.

"Each time I looked at her after that the picture of her as she stood, when she had burnt the spangled dress that night, with her head bowed against the stone chimney of her bare little cabin, flashed back to me. I thought of a thousand things I could say,

when the time came. And, when the time did come, I said scarcely anything!

"It happened the night the wind swung into the south and brought the first warm rain. I knew instantly—I understood all that had happened, the moment she swung open my cabin door and stood there, her hair bright with bits of moisture. She was panting—she had been running hard. A minute or more she waited, and then she threw wide her arms—like that, *m'sieur*—and choked, and ran and knelt, and put her head on my knees. I waited until the dry sobs no longer shook her shoulders—waited until she grew quieter and lifted her head and looked up at me. It was a girl's face no longer; it was a woman who knelt there at my feet.

"'Father,' she begged. 'Father, can you help me a little now?'

"I leant over and looked into her face, and for all the pain that swam in them her eyes were as brave and clear as the eyes of that collie, Jock.

"'You care for him'? I asked her at last.

"'Care!' she echoed. 'Care! I'd die for him—I'd die so gladly!'

"I shook my head.

"'It is not enough,' I told her—and her body went slack. Her head bowed, and lifted again, and she wet her lips with the tip of her tongue.

"'I know that—too,' she whispered. 'I knew that—was not enough.'

"I rose and raised her to her feet.

"'Would you live for him'? I asked her then. 'Would you live for him day and night? Do you care enough to keep on living, when nothing would be quite so easy as death?'

"She could not speak. She—she just nodded her head. Those grey eyes of hers were like stars in the dead white of her face.

"'Then that is all that anyone could hope for on earth,' I said to her as gently as I knew how. 'That is all that any man could ever ask.'

"She bowed her head and crossed the room. But at the door she wheeled—wheeled and ran back to me, and knelt and put my hand against her cheek. And I married them that same week—Conahan and that slim girl with the hair the colour of raw gold.

"I do not have to tell you that they were happy. You know Conahan well enough now yourself to answer that question. Why, day in and day out, during that summer, she went at dusk to the head of the rise there and waited for him. And one night, when I chanced to look from this window, one night when he had come off the basin later than usual and it was dark, I saw them pass the lighted windows of their own cabin, and she was not walking at his side. He'd swung her up on his arm and was carrying her back, not in a very different fashion from that first night when he brought her in out of the storm. The collie, Jock, trotted gravely at his heel. I heard faintly the lilting treble of her laugh. They were happy—happy enough!

"Summer ran into fall, and the men went back up river—and with them went Conahan. She was more than a little lonely those first few days after his going. That was how it chanced that I was sitting on the steps before their cabin on the evening of the second day, when a canoe swung around the far bend of the basin and glided up to the bank. He was a stranger—the man who held the paddle. I could see that even while he was hauling the frail craft out over the logs; he must have been some time on the trails, for the canoe floated light.

"He was not a river-jack nor a prospector down from the hills. He was just a drifter, like yourself, on his way out to the States. And I was watching him—watching curiously, for new faces were not frequent here at Singing River—when I became suddenly conscious of the woman behind me.

"She had been standing in the doorway, talking and laughing a little. Now her voice trailed off into a queer silence, and when I turned she was leaning forward, tense as steel, staring at the newcomer—staring hard and breathing quickly. He did not see us, or even turn his head, and after he had passed from view toward Jean Coteau's, the girl's eyes swung to mine.

"'Why, do you know him?' I asked in quick surprise. I spoke before I thought. It was quite a while before she answered.

"'I—I thought,' she faltered at last, 'I thought he was— He looked like a man I once knew a little.'

"That was all she said—all she had a chance to say—for at that same moment the fur agent came hurrying across from his house and begged her to go back with him quickly. She went—went immediately—and Conahan came back down from the river camp not a half-hour later that same night!

"Before he was a dozen paces from me he asked for her, and when I told him that the agent's wife was very ill, he stood for an instant, his face clouded. Then he turned

aimlessly and started for Jean Coteau's, and I rose and went with him.

"*M'sieur*, have you ever felt, even without hearing or turning to see, the presence of some other person in the room behind you? Then you will understand a little how I knew, without real reason, that the thing for which I had been waiting, day after day, was about to come that night.

"We crossed to Coteau's, but the men tilted back against the walls did not even notice our coming that night. They were listening to something else far too eagerly to hear us entering. The door was wide, for the night was warm, and as Conahan stopped stockstill in the doorway I looked over his shoulder and saw the thing that had halted him.

"There in the middle of the room sat that man whom I had seen hauling out his canoe from the basin, barely a half-hour before. Every man in the room was bent toward him. Jean Coteau leant hard across the bar. And on the stranger's knee lay the nose of that yellow collie Jock.

"He had been talking of something that was holding them as one man. Just for an instant he had hesitated in his tale, and at the moment of our coming he picked it up afresh.

"'— He ran the biggest place in Larrsen,' he went on, speaking to the whole room, 'the biggest faro layout in the town. Men called it the straightest game in the Hudson Bay country, even if they did hate him better than any man in the north. They called him straight, and he wasn't; and they found it out that night.

"'It happened like this. A stranger had come in from the southward, and the first night he bucked that game he came as near as any living man ever came to breaking the bank. She was dealing that night—the girl. There wasn't a cleaner, swifter handler of the cards in all the north-west. Her game was straight, too. Don't doubt that!

"'Well, he nearly broke the house that night, and when they quit in the morning he laughed at the man who owned the layout and promised to be back in the evening to finish the job. Hatfield—that was the proprietor's name—just smiled a little, and told him he would be welcome, and when play opened that next night he took the deal himself. The girl had his place as lookout.

"'The room was full—jammed to the corners with men who had come to watch. At first he won—the stranger, I mean—and then the crazy luck that had been his the night before turned dead around. Steadily, with every fall of the cards, he lost and lost until, when he was about cleaned out, he shoved what was left of his stack across the cloth and asked the bank to make it all or nothing. The dealer laughed in his face, and whipped out the cards, and he was sweeping in the chips when she swung down, panther-quick—that girl who had been lookout—and shot her arm over her shoulder, and ripped open the crooked box!

"'You could have heard a pin hit the floor in that room for an instant, and then things got pretty thick. A chair crashed over as Hatfield leapt to his feet. He screamed an oath at her, and struck at her face. Then he reached for his gun. He would have killed her that night, only the stranger was quicker, a bit. He drew the quicker gun, and he got Hatfield first—high through the right shoulder.'

"He stopped again for a moment in his story. Eyes the whole length and breadth of that room were beginning to lift furtively to the face of the man there in the open door beside me. Conahan was standing like a man turned to stone. All but Jean Coteau understood, and Coteau only leant farther across the bar and begged for the rest of the story.

"'And thees ees their dog?' he asked. 'You know heem?'

"The stranger put his hand on the collie's head and looked down into his face.

"'Jock,' he coaxed. 'Jock, sir!'

"And the dog cocked his ears and whined back at him.

"'Know him!' that man cried. 'Know him! Why, he was the lead dog of the only sledge team below the Yukon that could have brought them through the storm of that next week. He was the lead for Hatfield's string. They went from Larrsen that same night, for Hatfield was hard hit and going fast. Nobody saw them leave; they were just gone the next morning. I don't know why she stuck to him, for men often wondered why she hadn't killed him herself long before that. I doubt if anybody will ever know. But she left Larrsen that night and took him with her. Maybe it was because blood is thicker than water, after all, but that is hard to believe. But she was his daughter—that girl who dealt faro for Hatfield's bank—the daughter of Silent Hatfield. From Little Salmon to the Line men knew of her—they called her Lady Lou.

"'The storm wiped out their trail three days out,' he finished. 'The stranger who had done for Hatfield tried to follow and lost them that third day. No word ever came back from them. Men who ought to know said that they couldn't have lived the blizzard out—but here is their lead dog, Jock. Tell me—did they win through?'

"He waited for his answer—and still waited. Nobody spoke. I felt Conahan's body tightening and tightening. Then, in one stride, he crossed to that man who sat with the dog's nose on his knee. By both shoulders he gripped him and half lifted him, and whirled him about in his chair. That stranger was no coward, for he looked death in the face that instant, calmly, without flinching. I liked his face, for all that it was very hard about the lips. It was honest! I could see that, and Conahan must have realised it, too, for his grip slowly loosened. A long time he stared into the stranger's eyes before he spoke with deadly deliberation.

"'If you have lied to-night,' he promised him, 'I'll kill you myself in the morning!'

"Then he turned—turned and went more slowly than I had ever seen him go before, back across to his cabin. I went with him; I was afraid to leave him alone that night.

"The cabin was empty—she was still sitting with the agent's wife—and hour after hour he sat there in that room which she had made so much like herself, waiting for her. He sat with his face in his hands, never moving, never lifting his head. *M'sieur*, can you quite understand what that night was to him? Why, all that other men had found in many women, he had found in her alone!

"It was almost dawn when he lifted his head for the first time, his face white and stiff as a mask, and stared straight before him at nothing at all.

"'She lied to me,' he said aloud, answering the question that had been throbbing all night in his brain. 'She lied to me—if she did not tell the whole truth.'

"Then I heard her coming. She was running—she had seen the light. And she cried out to him as she stood in the doorway—cried out gladly to him, and—and then stood dumb, gripping the frame.

"She knew. She knew! She had seen the stranger pass across to Coteau's; she saw the face of that man before her, haggard and white, eyes devouring her face, and she needed no further explanation to make her understand. She started towards him impulsively, and then stopped. Minute after minute passed, with the painful pulse pounding in his temples. Then he spoke:

"'I have to ask you—for-r you failed to tell me all,' he said. 'I want it fr-rom your own lips.'

"He was half mad, and that was the question he flung at her. Her face flamed, and then went white, and she leant towards him as though she would not believe what she had heard.

"Then she stiffened, as though it were a lash he had struck her with and she answered him quietly, almost word for word in the words of the stranger in Jean Coteau's:

"'I'm the girl who dealt faro for Hatfield's bank. I'm the girl they call Lady Lou.'

"Don't you see it was the pride of her he had touched? Why, it was the blood of that man who lay yonder under the pines, good blood for all his twisted lips. For there was another answer that she could have given him—*oui*, a far different one. There was no answer she would give to that question as Conahan asked it that night! And Conahan groped out with his hands on the table, as though his eyes no longer saw, and steadied himself erect. He swayed as he crossed to the door.

"I tried to bar his passage!

"'You cannot go now,' I cried out at him. 'Man, you cannot go like this!'

"'She lied to me,' he repeated hoarsely, 'she lied, for she did not tell the whole truth.'

"'Then I lied, too!' I was desperate that night. 'I lied, too, for I knew as much as that!'

"He looked down at me as though I were some curious creature that he had never seen before, and that was the only time Conahan ever spoke to me in anger.

"'Then I'll tell you now, so that you may know,' he said. 'Too much r-righteousness will tur-rn stale anny real man's soul. Stand aside!' he warned—and I stood aside before the thing that was in that man's face.

"The stranger whose canoe lay in the basin was waiting for me when I went back to my cabin. He met me at the door.

"'Father,' he asked, 'Father, what have I done?'

"'You've done a great hurt to a good man—and a far better woman,' I answered him.

"Then I told him all that had happened—all there was to tell—from the night when Conahan first found her at the trail end below the dam. He understood and sat silent a long time after I had finished.

["CONAHAN" continued overleaf.]

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"'I wish I could have known,' he said, finally. 'I wish I could have told him the rest!'

"And then, there in my cabin, he told me the story of Silent Hatfield, and of the girl who was his daughter—the girl men called Lady Lou.

"Nobody ever seemed to know quite who he was, or from where he hailed, or why, in spite of all the care he took of her, he hated that girl-child as he did. Only a few who were keener than the rest realised that it might have been because she was white and golden—because, day by day, she grew more and more like the other woman who, when she could no longer stay with him and live, had run away and left him and the baby, too.

"'It was he,' the stranger told me, 'who bought her that crimson, spangled dress—her own father! He dressed her like any other woman of the dance-halls, and set her to deal faro for his bank. Why, he simply went to work in cold blood to make her what all the others were, just because her face was fine and smooth, and reminded him of the face of the woman he hated! Of course, he wasn't sane. There are many men here in the north who have lived too long with one idea, and gone stark, raving mad.

"'But that was what he just tried to do—and he failed. And in the two years that followed he grew to fear that girl as he had never feared anything on earth. He'd taught her too well, for her own hatred of him grew to be a deadly thing. He failed, Father,' the stranger said, 'and I should know, for I am the man who almost broke Hatfield's bank: I am the man who shot him that night. And of all the men who knew that girl called Lady Lou there is not one but would tell you what I have told to-night—not one who would not have shot gladly in my place.'

"Morning had come when the man had finished his story. He was going on out that day, and he paused just a moment in the door as he was leaving.

"'I wish I could have known,' he repeated gravely. 'Will you tell him, Father, when he comes down river again? He will believe it from your lips.'

"I looked across at Conahan's cabin after he had gone. It was broad daylight, but I could see through the window a light still burning. She looked up as I stopped in the doorway. Her eyes were dry—dry and feverishly bright. At that moment I wished only that she might weep. *M'sieur*, she was still standing—standing stiffly erect where she had stood when Conahan passed her and went out into the night.

"'Why,' I asked her then, 'why didn't you tell him all?'

"Something in her face as she looked at me recalled vividly the loathing I had seen in her eyes that day when she first told me her name—loathing for the very name she bore. She understood my question; she knew that the stranger had told me the rest, and she gazed fixedly into my face before she spoke.

"'At first'—her voice was a dull, weary monotone—'that first night I hoped no one would ever know; I hoped it had died with him, there in the storm. Then, when I grew stronger and could think clearly, I knew that couldn't be; I thought he knew—I thought you understood the day I told you my name—and did not speak because he understood.'

"She stood clenching and unclenching her hands.

"'I fought a week in that blizzard,' she flared out bitterly, 'with nothing to keep me up, for the day he died he threw the provisions from the sledge while I was breaking trail, so that I would die, too. I fought two years to keep out of hell itself, because somehow I believed—I who had never been taught!—that some day there might be a man who would care, because I had made a good fight. I could have answered him—I could have told him that. Father, he had no faith!'

"*Oui, m'sieur*, that was it. It was the woman pride of her. What could I do—or say? The stranger had told me to tell Conahan the truth—all the truth—when he came down river again, but Conahan did not come.

"Throughout the fall and far into the winter I waited, and he did not come down the river road. Many, many days I would have gone for him, except for what I saw in her eyes. I had interfered too much already.

"And she—she went on living not much different from the way she had lived before I married them. Days when she was needed she cared for the agent's wife, but she stayed on in Conahan's cabin. Often I'd see her at night through a lighted window, and cross to talk with her for a little while. I'd see her sewing, always sewing, and yet when I knocked, and she opened the door after a little longer wait than usual, there would not be so much as a needle in sight when I entered. Her small face was growing wistful those days—wistful and hungry-eyed

—and her lips that had always smiled so readily, smiled but seldom now.

"I should have understood—yet I did not! Had I known I would never have gone out to the Mission that winter. But I did not understand—and I was gone a month.

"The night I came back, and rode down the Beckett trail that runs into the square yonder, almost the first thing I saw was Jean Coteau's little bay mare standing already hitched to a sleigh before Conahan's door. Coteau himself saw me coming, and he raced to meet me. And then he told me, quickly, but not so brokenly but what I understood. I, too, was running when we crossed back to the cabin.

"The doctor opened the door for me. It seemed as though he was always where he was needed most—that doctor. I often wonder if he ever slept—or just died tired. He opened the door and held up his hand, and shook his head—so. Then he stood aside for me to pass. Coteau uncovered and followed me in.

"*M'sieur*, I have never seen a face quite as beautiful as that girl's face was that night. It was as white as the night when Conahan found her and brought her in, save for two brilliant crimson spots that glowed beneath her eyes. Her lids lifted as I crossed to her, and she smiled a little and started to speak as though my coming at that moment was quite the most natural thing in the world. I had to lean close to catch the words.

"'I promised you I would,' she breathed. 'I told you I cared enough—to keep on living! It's hard. It would be very much easier—to die.'

"She fumbled under her pillow until her fingers closed over the thing she sought.

"'Will you take this to him?' she begged me. 'Take it, and give it to him, and tell him if he will hurry—I will try to be here when he comes. Tell him, Father, please, that I am very tired—waiting.'

"She pressed the thing she had drawn from under her pillow into my hand, and then I saw what it was—just a bit of soft white linen, *m'sieur*, a bit of a garment scarcely larger than a man's hand. I took it from her and nodded my head, and somehow found my way outside.

"Jean Coteau put the reins into my hands His face was set.

"'Hold her a leetle, going up, Father,' he advised, and wiped his eyes on the back of his sleeve. 'Eet ees a long road. An' then, when you would hurry back, just talk to her a leetle. She—she ees never feel the wheep.'

"*M'sieur*, I am not going to tell you of that drive that night. I want to tell the rest quickly. But Jean Coteau had good reason to love that little thoroughbred mare of his, for she was little more than wet when the lights of the long bunkhouse, and, close beside it, Conahan's own shack, burst out ahead of me through the trees.

"I saw him through the window, even before I had leapt from the sleigh. He was sitting alone before a dead fire, his head in his hands. I—I hesitated a moment at the door, fumbling in my pocket for that bit of white cloth which the girl had given me.

"Then I went in.

"He came to his feet at my entrance. His face was thin, but it was granite hard. We stood a long time staring into each other's eyes. Then I went over to him.

"'Conahan,' I said, 'Conahan, man, do you believe that any but a good woman could ever have made stitches fine and soft as these?'

"And I held out that small garment to him.

"He took it—took it and held it in both hands before his eyes. He went white; then the blood poured back into his face while he gazed at it. I saw his lips quiver; saw him fight to steady them, before his eyes blurred, and he bowed his head.

"I told him the rest. We had lost too much time already. I told him that she had said he must hurry—that she would try to be there when he came—and before I had finished he was outside and swinging the sleigh around in the beaten track.

"That mare of Jean Coteau's showed what was in her thoroughbred blood that night, for from the very start Conahan drove as though there were but one mile, instead of a score, to go. Once, just as we reached the burnt slash half-way home, she put one fore-foot through a hole in the corduroy road-bed, and when she went down hard the sleigh piled up against her.

"It shot me over the dash, that sudden stop. I was not quick in getting to my feet, either, for I'd hit heavily upon a fresh-cut pine stub, and Conahan had her back on her feet again when I was able to crawl into the sleigh. Stop! Stop that night? Why, she'd called to him—she needed him! *M'sieur*, Conahan was going home!

"And yet he dared not open the door of his lighted cabin an hour later, when we

["CONAHAN" continued overleaf.]

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drew rein before it. He reached out his hand for the latch, and it trembled till there was no strength left in the fingers. I pulled off my mitten and put out my hand, and saw that it was wet and stained with blood. My shoulder had hit that stump hard, *m'sieur*. Blood had been running down warm inside my sleeve. Conahan stared at it a moment in odd fascination; then he reached again, steadily this time, for the latch.

"'Father,' that big river-man murmured to me, 'Father, you're more than a bit av a man!'

"He opened the door, and we went in.

"How can I tell you to-night how long he stood and gazed at her? I hardly knew that night how long it was. He just stood and stared and stared at her white face half buried in her thick hair, and then—then his head bowed, his shoulders dropped, and a dry sob racked him. Blindly he went across to her, and as he knelt, he broke. Conahan went all to pieces!

"And she just put her hands on his bowed head, and—'Man, man!' she murmured, until his shoulders shook no longer, and he slipped his arm beneath her and held her close.

"He must have whispered a prayer in her ear for she reached down and touched the bit of a bundle that lay beside her and put her cheek against his.

"'Stay,' she quavered, repeating his words. 'Stay! Why, I could hardly go now, could I—and leave two lonesome men?'

"The old doctor from Beckett caught my eye and nodded his head toward my cabin. I turned to follow him out, but at the door we both halted at the thin little cry that went through the room.

"The head of Conahan lifted as he heard. Then he turned his face toward us, the soul of him there in his eyes.

"'Hark ye, Father! Listen,' he whispered. 'Listen, 'tis Conahan's son!'"

PIERRETTE.

I wooed Pierrette in the moonlight,
  She broke from my arms and fled,
With a roguish gleam in her dark blue eyes,
  And a toss of her curly head.
Like a will-o'-the-wisp she flitted
  As swift as some fairy sprite,
Till the darkness gathered and held her,
  And her laughter died on the night.

I sought Pierrette in the moonlight,
  And ran her to earth at last,
Where the moonbeams banished the shadows
  I caught her and held her fast.
I kissed Pierrette in the moonlight
  Ere ever I set her free,
And then, to my joy and glory,
  Pierrette—well—Pierrette kissed me!

D.

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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

Prospects.

MY WAR-TIME WORRIES.

PERHAPS you who read would say off-hand that it is foolish to talk about the prospects for 1915.

"Let us get this war over," you would observe, a little coldly and with an accent of rebuke, "and then we will discuss the future if you feel disposed."

With the greatest respect, I do not agree. For the moment my business is not war, but the conduct of the ROYAL, and it is expedient to consider what shall be our policy during what is bound to be one of the most exciting years of history.

I do not suppose many members of the reading public realise how enormously war has complicated his task for the editor of such a magazine as the ROYAL, remembering always that the ROYAL goes to press six weeks ahead of publication. It is necessary to reflect to a certain extent the critical days in which we live; the great question is how to do so when events move with such amazing swiftness.

For example, this morning's papers (I write in the middle of January) are full of a Zeppelin raid on the East Coast. For a week we shall talk about nothing but Zeppelins, and the dailies and weeklies will breathe Zeppelins from cover to cover. How do I stand in this matter?

My next number—the one in which amateur contributors always want to see their contributions!—is printed and will be on sale in a day or so. This one has all but gone to press. Consequently, the April number is the nearest in which we could refer to Zeppelins.

THE WAY OUT.

Thus, we are bound to treat the war rather from the point of view of general interest, and this I have begun to do and propose to continue doing in such articles as "Bravo, Belgium!" by M. Camille Roussel in the January number, "The French As They Are," by Mr. John N. Raphael in the February number, and "What I think of the War," by Mr. Will Crooks, M.P., in this number.

It seems to me that all topical information lies within the scope of the daily and weekly papers. Monthly magazines can and ought to supply comment on this from the pens of experts.

Ye FICTION.

What a change has come over the British people's fiction since the war—and how much the change is for the better! Gone—for ever, I hope—is the ultra-sentimental type of story, the so-called humour based entirely on wild exaggeration, and, of course, the good old hardy perennial describing imaginary conflicts with Germany. I fear some of these were sadly inaccurate in the light of recent history!

To me, the watchman on the gateway, there is noticeable a strong demand for *sincere* fiction nowadays. The fires of war would seem to have purified us as a nation, so that we care no longer for anything unreal or pretentious. Every story must have some solid basis in reality and human nature.

I welcome this feeling because for many a long day I have tried to interest ROYAL readers in a more sincere type of story. While what has been called realism, and which generally takes the form of ugliness and sordidness for its own sake, has no place in a popular magazine, if indeed it has a place anywhere, the real human interest story is, in my opinion, the finest type to be found.

It is this type which I am endeavouring to provide during 1915.

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A Striking New Nelson Picture.

THE TOAST IS "BRITAIN."

By FRED ROE, R.I.

HUNG "on the line" in last year's Academy, the original painting by FRED ROE, R.I., of which the above is a sing'e-colour photograph, was one of the pictures of the year, and attracted a great deal of attention, no less by its artistic excellence than by reason of the historic incident which it portrays.

The picture is of an episode in the life of probably the most beloved of our National Heroes, and relates to a complimentary banquet at which Nelson was seated next to Benjamin West; he expressed admiration for the painter's "Death of General Wolfe," and asked West why he had painted no more such pictures. West replied that there were no more such subjects left, but that he feared Nelson's intrepidity would some day furnish him with an opportunity, which he would not lose; Nelson thereupon is said to have replied, "Then I hope I shall die in the next action."

The subject is one which always makes a strong appeal to British sentiment—more particularly so at the present time—and the proprietors of Wright's Coal Tar Soap have therefore, at very great expense, decided to issue a facsimile reproduction of the picture in colours, which is in every respect of the high standard fitting to the occasion and the subject.

The reproduction, mounted as it is on best plate paper, size 33 ins. by 27 ins., and entirely free from advertisement matter, is a most handsome picture, worthy to grace the walls of the most tasteful home; it will be sent FREE, securely packed, to users of WRIGHT'S Coal Tar Soap who send 24 outside wrappers from the 4d. tablets of soap, together with 6d. to cover postage (inland). Foreign postage extra. Address, "Britain," Wright's Coal Tar Soap, 44-50 Southwark Street, London, S.E.

A limited number of these pictures have now been treated by a special process, giving them a finish exactly resembling an actual oil painting. These may be had by special request, accompanied by 36 wrappers from Wright's Coal Tar Soap and 6d. for postage (inland).

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